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The Week

THE fury of the public, whenever a prominent man is attacked by an assassin, is based on the defenselessness of the victim and the irrelevance of the protest, regardless of the degree of approval of the victim's acts and personality. Rulers ought not to be installed or removed except by a popular verdict. Even though a ruler be oppressive and cruel, the very opposite of President-elect Roosevelt, no individual act of violence will prevent another like him from taking his place. Though it may sound strange to those who seize the occasion of assassinations to denounce and legislate against "radicals" in general, most revolutionaries are as firmly convinced of these truths as the conservative upholders of old regimes. Particularly ignorant is the attack on Communists as a result of the attempt on President-elect Roosevelt's life. Neither Mensheviks nor Bolsheviks ever countenanced assassination or individual acts of violence even before the end of the Tsars. Their role was to bring about a change, not of persons alone, but of institutions. You will never find Communists engaging in conspiracies or conducting sabotage or exerting any kind of pressure except by collective means. As to Zangara's political tenets, he is reputed by his former employer to be a Communist, a Socialist and an Anarchist—which is much like being a Catholic, a Presbyterian and a Mormon. He was registered as a Republican in the primary elections. Assassination is the characteristic action of racketeers and gangsters, of crazy men, of extreme nationalists (as in Japan). If it is thought that laws can guard against the crime; it is against these classes that the laws should be directed.

ON THE whole, the press behaved pretty well in regard to the attempted assassination of the President-elect. A few silly editorials have demanded that all aliens be registered, or all Communists deported, but these voices have been fewer than we had the right to expect. Most newspapers promptly recognized that Zangara was mentally unbalanced, and that he acted alone. An exception must be noted in the case of the tabloid New York Mirror which, on its front page, on the second day after the attempted assassination, published a huge headline "Roosevelt Death Planned by Reds." Careful search of the paper revealed an article which said that "New York anarchists" plotted the assassination in the "belief" of Allen Straight, head of the United States Secret Service. Naturally, Mr. Straight advanced absolutely no reason for this wild guess. Under the circumstances, The Daily Mirror's headline, like so many other things in that journal, was something to make every honest journalist sick at his stomach.

IT IS becoming apparent to even the most charitable interpreter of the German situation that the National Socialist Trinity in the Cabinet is ruling that nation. If proof had been wanting, it was furnished by the suppression of Germania, the principal organ of the Centrist party, in which Vice-Chancellor von Papen owns considerable stock. The sweeping power of the National Socialist Cabinet minority and the arrogance with which it is being used is illustrated by the deposition of some twenty high officials with known Social Democratic, Democratic and Centrist affiliations and their replacement, almost exclusively, from Fascist ranks. The Hugenberg following feels the situation keenly, and in two of its most prominent organs, the Kreuzzeitung and the Hamburger Nachrichten, complains

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of the presumptuousness of its allies in the government. The former expresses the fear that the "Nationalist party is making another attempt to usurp the sole power of government" and believes that "nationalist circles in Germany are losing confidence in the new Reich administration from which they had hoped so much." The government meanwhile is proceeding systematically to make Prussia the stronghold of cultural retrogression. Vice-Chancellor von Papen, allegedly placed in the Cabinet by von Hindenburg to conteract Fascist influence, appointed Bernhard Rust, district official of the National Socialist party in Hanover, to the Ministry of Education in Prussia in full charge of all schools, universities and institutions of art, science and literature. This Nazi official is instituting a veritable reign of terror in the higher institutions of learning. More than 150 professors and high-school teachers of Jewish extraction or republican sympathies have already been discharged, and the offensive has only just begun. That he dared demand the resignation of Heinrich Mann, Käte Kollowitz and other persons of international prominence from the Academy of Arts, Science and Literature shows to what lengths the present rulers of Germany are prepared to go.

THE bank moratorium in Michigan is another reminder of the distance we have yet to go before we have an intelligent and efficient banking system in the United States. We do not yet know how much truth there is in the reports that Henry Ford was responsible for the situation which made the eight-day moratorium necessary, nor do we greatly care. When society is stupid enough to give one man, or a group of men, the power to jeopardize five hundred banks, the situation is about equally outrageous whether he does or doesn't exercise that power. If Americans do not like a condition under which 4,600 banks have failed in a few years, all they have to do is to change it. And if they want to know how to make a beginning, they need look no farther than across the border to Canada where, with times quite as hard as they are in the United States, not one bank has failed in ten years.

THE League of Nations has confounded the cynics by taking more drastic action against Japan than most people had supposed likely. The Committee of Nineteen not only prepared a forty-thousand-word indictment of Japan's action in Manchuria, but broadcast this report to the whole world through the League's own short-wave radio station. Students of *realpolitik* will assume that Great Britain and France decided they could gain more, at the moment, through supporting the United States than through standing by Japan; but this is only part of the story. Japan's violation of her pledges, expressed in the Covenant, the Kellogg Treaty and the Nine Power Pact, was so obvious that in the long run the League had to recognize it or stand self-convicted of the most monumental hypocrisy. The great question by which the world is confronted is: what next? Shall the League attempt to apply "economic sanctions"—that polite diplomatic phrase which covers every sort of pressure short of war? Such a thing is clearly impossible without the assistance of the United States and perhaps also the U.S.S.R. This country will be much less inclined to join in sanctions under Mr. Roosevelt than it was under Mr. Hoover; and it is hard to imagine Russia's entering such a dangerous game at all. We hope and believe, therefore, that the world will recognize the plain truth, that the application of sanctions is likely to lead to war; and will let the matter rest with the present "moral judgment" against Japan, the only thing now possible.

JUST when hope had been abandoned that Congress would act on prohibition at this session, it astonished its critics by adopting a resolution for repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment. The resolution is, moreover, a better one than we had any right to expect. True, legal difficulties may be encountered in the attempt to ratify through state conventions. The text says, on the vexed question of continuing federal control of the interstate liquor traffic, only that "the transportation or importation into any state, territory or possession of the United States for delivery or use therein of intoxicating liquors, in violation of the laws thereof, is hereby prohibited." This would seem to meet the requirements of the Dry states, provided Congress passes the necessary enforcing legislation. The battle now shifts from Washington to the states themselves. Will the Wets be able to rally majorities in thirty-six states within the prescribed limit of seven years? Without overlooking the continuing strength of the prohibition movement in certain areas, we believe that the effort at repeal will be successful, and that the country will now return to the course from which it should never have departed—the attempt to promote temperance in every part of the nation in accordance with the prevailing local attitude.

HOW many unemployed are there in the United States? Unfortunately, we do not know. Almost alone among the great nations of the world the United States does not keep adequate national figures on employment. We know, however, that the number of jobless, and of those on part time, has been growing with great rapidity; and there is reason to believe that the official estimates which have emanated from President Hoover and other administration spokesmen have usually been too optimistic by a million or two. An interesting attempt to count the unemployed appeared in a recent issue of The Business Week. It is based on the census of unemployment made in 1930 by the United States Census Bureau, and "the adjusting facilities of the employment indexes compiled by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, the

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Federal Reserve Board, the National Industrial Conference Board and the American Federation of Labor."

WORKING from these figures, The Business Week finds that there were at least 15,252,000 unemployed last November, with the assurance that the number has been much increased since then. This is 31.2 percent of those who normally are gainfully occupied in the United States. It includes 17 percent of the workers in agriculture, 40 percent of those in forestry and fishing, 45 percent of those engaged in the extraction of minerals, 46 percent of the workers in manufacturing, 38 percent of those in transportation, 21 percent of those in trade, 10 percent of those in the public service, 10 percent of professional men and 35 percent of those in domestic and personal service. The Business Week estimates that on a basis of one and a half dependents for each worker, 37,500,000 men, women and children are directly affected by unemployment. Social workers estimate that one-fourth of those so affected are receiving some sort of public assistance. If this estimate is correct, it would mean that at least 9,000,000 people are now dependent on charity—and probably more, since the authorities are also called upon to aid many who are partially employed but unable to support themselves on their earnings. The Conference of Mayors in Washington has just shown us that some of the largest cities are virtually bankrupt today. There is no doubt that direct federal assistance on a huge scale is now necessary, and will be needed for a long time to come.

BOTH the Hoover administration and the country's bankers have renewed their drive against the publicity provisions of the new Reconstruction Finance Corporation law. The argument runs that when people learn that the R.F.C. has made a loan to a given institution, they become alarmed, there is a run on the bank, and it fails. This is an ingenious theory, entirely unsubstantiated by fact. More than 4,500 banks have failed without either an R.F.C. loan or any publicity about their condition. Something like five hundred banks have failed after an R.F.C. loan, most of them without any publicity. It is suggested that the Louisiana banking situation resulted from publication of the report of R.F.C. assistance; but it would be just as easy to argue that news of a loan reassures the depositors. Mr. Mark Sullivan, in a rather hysterical article in The New York Herald Tribune, hints broadly that the Michigan difficulty is another result of the publicity rule. Mr. Sullivan should go take a long walk in the fresh air: there was no publicity about the Michigan situation until the moratorium was announced. The blunt truth is that the Hoover administration, at least, and the bankers of the country have shown that they are not to be trusted to use in secret $2,000,000,000 of public funds.

AT THE last moment before the announcement of Cabinet appointments, it is still uncertain who is to be Secretary of Labor. This is the one post which, it seems to us, ought to be given to one person, and to one person only. Miss Frances Perkins is by all odds the best fitted of any of the available candidates. She is, moreover, the best Cabinet timber among any of the women who have been suggested for any portfolio, and it is high time to have a woman in the Cabinet. A Secretary of Labor who is more than a figurehead will do as much, perhaps, as any appointed official to render the Roosevelt regime better in administrative personnel than was its predecessor.

THE inroads which the depression is making upon educational institutions are becoming more and more alarming as the hard times drag on. Throughout the country local and state governments are trimming their budgets at the expense of teachers and students. A deplorable move in this direction has been that of the Budget Bureau of the North Carolina Legislature, which now proposes that the appropriation to the state university be cut to $390,000. This represents a 56-percent reduction in state appropriations since 1929, and if it is finally accepted by the legislature, will force this great university into the role of a third or fourth-rate educational institution. The University of North Carolina, having only a small endowment, depends upon the state for almost all of its support, and the present proposed cut would leave it so crippled that it might be years before it could regain its position as the most active and liberal university of the South.

Would It Help Us to Go off Gold?

MR. H. N. BRAILSFORD'S article in this issue of The New Republic indicates why it will be difficult for Mr. Roosevelt to make a bargain by which the United States will concede something on war debts for a restoration of the gold standard by Great Britain. Even the more conservative forces in London, who look forward to a return to gold some time, though on a new parity, are not inclined to take that step before June 15.

In the meantime, the fact that the world has no stable medium of international exchange will obstruct revival of trade. And the agitation in the United States for inflation, already making rapid strides among the farmers, is likely to gain strength. In particular, the proposal to devaluate the dollar by a change in its gold content will be pushed. Mr. Brailsford's account of the British experience may be used to make out a good case for this course. It appears, according to his argument, that Britain has, by going off gold, at once relieved debtors and stabilized prices. Why, it will be said, should we

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not join the British, if not in going off gold entirely, at least in a depreciated currency which would relieve debtors at home and would repair the fault abroad between the gold dollar and the depreciated pound?

The New Republic has no superstitious reverence for the gold standard, and would welcome any good means for lessening the existing burden of debt. A relatively stable currency, capable of being held at a constant ratio to other currencies, is the ultimately desired objective, no matter whether it is based on gold or not. But we have grave doubts whether the proposal to change the gold content in the dollar—or even to abandon the gold standard entirely—would in itself accomplish the results which its proponents desire.

Let us be clear on one crucial point. If any change in the basis of currency is to relieve debtors at the expense of creditors, it must do so through a change in the prices of commodities and services. If, for instance, the farmer is to be rendered better able to pay the mortgage on his farm (without a reduction in the interest or principal of the mortgage), this result can be achieved only through an increase in the prices of wheat, hogs, cotton, etc. On this point Mr. Brailsford, usually an acute observer of economic affairs, seems to us to have made a slip. In what sense has going off gold reduced the British debt burden? British debts owed in countries still on gold have, of course, been rendered more onerous. British debts owed in countries which have gone off gold, and which use currencies linked to sterling, have not been affected at all. And British internal debts cannot have been lightened if British internal prices have not risen. If the manufacturer and the farmer receive no more for their products, and the wage earner's pay has not increased, it is now just as hard for them to pay their debts as it was before the gold standard crumbled. An inflation which does not increase prices, either relatively to other prices or absolutely, is not an inflation.

Could abandonment of the gold standard, or a reduction of the gold content in the dollar, affect prices in this country? Some advocates of such measures talk as if there were a magic process by which the passage of a law to this effect would overnight change the price of everything. They talk as if prices were directly related to gold. But of course that is not so. Gold operates in our system merely as a reserve back of currency and bank credit. It affects prices only in so far as it affects the value of the means of payment in use. If the available supply of currency and credit were insufficient because there was not enough gold in our reserves, an abandonment of the gold standard or a reduction of the gold content in the dollar would, by permitting expansion of currency and credit, tend to raise prices. But this is not the case. We have large excess reserves. The trouble is not that we have not a sufficient supply of currency and credit—in the banks. The trouble is that they are not being used in business and trade. We could change to a dirt standard without in the least affecting our internal price level. If business and trade actually were using all the credit now available without going off gold, we should probably have price increases which would more than satisfy the wildest inflationist.

It is only in foreign trade that a change in the gold standard might help. At present it costs a great deal for Great Britain and other countries which have gone off gold to buy in the United States. You have to pay a great many more pounds than before to buy a certain number of dollars. Therefore, it is argued, if we passed a law saying that a dollar were worth, say, only half as much gold as before, foreign nations could buy more of our wheat, cotton, automobiles, etc. This would tend to raise prices in the United States.

There is a possibility that this might happen, but in our opinion only a faint possibility. The exchange price of a currency on the gold standard appears to be held within narrow limits by the amount of gold which, by law, the unit of currency is worth. Let the price of the gold dollar rise too high in terms of gold pounds, and gold will flow from England to the United States until the old parity is resumed. Therefore it is easy to infer that if you change the gold content of either currency, you at once change their prices relative to each other. But, in a situation like the present, this is putting the cart before the horse. The pound did not depreciate in terms of the dollar because England went off the gold standard, but England went off the gold standard because the pound depreciated in terms of the dollar. The supply of pounds in the market seeking conversion to dollars was so much greater than the supply of dollars seeking pounds that there was a steady and enormous pressure on the price of the pound, too great for any possible flow of gold to remedy. Great Britain therefore had to stop the outflow of gold and let the price of the pound sink.

This means that the relative value of currencies is ultimately fixed, not by legislation or by gold standards, but by the relative demand for and supply of the currencies. This in turn depends on the balance of payments between the countries, arising from trade both visible and invisible, and from international financial transactions. Nothing at all would now happen to the exchange relationships between the pound and the dollar as a direct result of any legislation fixing another gold value of the dollar, or depriving it of gold value altogether. Pounds could buy more dollars only if Englishmen bought less than at present in the United States or invested and loaned less money here, or if Americans bought more in England than at present or loaned more money there.

Even assuming, however, that going off gold would in some way give rise to more European demand for American exports, there is still the probability that the potentially importing countries, all

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at present bent on national self-sufficiency, would increase tariffs and further restrict import quotas to neutralize American competition with their own producers. Unless something is done about these restrictions on trade, any other device aimed at world revival is certain to be futile.

The conclusion of the whole matter seems to be that in efforts to revive both domestic and foreign trade, tinkering with currencies is a blind alley. It is indeed desirable to promise stability in currencies and to facilitate stable exchanges. But any attempt to achieve this result by currency or banking policy alone is based on a misunderstanding of the way economic processes work, on a reversal of cause and effect. What we have to do is to control the relationships among prices and incomes, to regulate production, investment and the specific uses of credit. Only out of a successful and comprehensive effort to master our whole economic structure can a desirable effect on prices arise.

Two Laws against Labor

THE ATTEMPTED murder of the President-elect had its echo in Congress: there was immediate pressure for the passage of two bills designed to prevent all forms of radical activity. It was exactly as if, on hearing of an earthquake in Japan, Congress got busy raising the tariff. The Dies Bill having already passed the House, Senator Hatfield tried to rush it through the Senate. The House Judiciary Committee reversed itself by submitting a favorable report on the Eslick Bill. Just what do these two measures imply?

The Dies Bill provides for the deportation of alien Communists, and then gives such an all-embracing definition of Communism that practically any alien who joined a labor union and then took part in a strike could at once be shipped out of the country, as could any alien who believed in the forceful overthrow of any government whatever—even the Machado or the Gomez government—excepting those now controlled by Communists; in other words, agitation against the soviet government of Russia is explicitly authorized. Membership in any organization even distantly connected with Russia or the Third International—for example, an Unemployed Council or the Friends of the Soviet Union—would be grounds for deportation.

The Eslick Bill goes even farther, since it applies not only to aliens but also to native-born Americans. Its principal purpose is "To make it a crime to advocate or promote the overthrow of the government of the United States by force and violence." But Section 3 of the bill provides that "Whoever openly, willfully or deliberately justifies or defends by word of mouth or in writing the assassination or assaulting of any officer of the United States, or any officer of any state, or any officer of any subdivision thereof, because of his official character or act . . ." may be imprisoned not more than ten years or fined not more than $10,000, or both. In calculating the effect of such a law, it must be remembered that the courts have given a very loose meaning to the word "assault." Carried to its logical extreme, the Eslick Bill would mean that anyone who "justified" his neighbor for resisting a dog-catcher could be sent to Leavenworth.

It is fortunate that the Dies and the Eslick Bills are not designed to have a retroactive effect. Under the terms of the first, most of the Puritans, the Huguenots, the Irish Fenians, the German revolutionaries of 1848, the Cuban lawyers and professors now gathering in Miami, would have been barred from this country. Thomas Paine and Carl Schurz would have been deported. Under the Eslick Bill, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison could have been fined $10,000 and sentenced to ten years in the penitentiary—and the same fate would loom over any publisher who reprinted Jefferson's letters.

But these imaginary cases need not be considered; what is important about the Dies and the Eslick Bills is the real purpose for which they would be employed. They would have no effect on half-demented assassins like Guiteau or Czolgosz or Zangara. They would, on the other hand, be dangerous to labor unions, even the most conservative. Under the present deportation laws, the Department of Labor has already become a strike-breaking agency. Under the Dies and Eslick Bills it could coöperate with the Department of Justice to suppress any hard-fought strike by deporting all the aliens concerned in it and sending the native leaders to jail. Fundamentally these two measures against radicalism would become laws against labor. And by turning laboring men first into criminals, then into secret revolutionaries, they would threaten the security of the government which they are ostensibly designed to protect.

An Attack on Depression

THE COUNTRY is at last coming to realize that all of the plans of the Hoover administration for fighting the depression, added together, are an utter failure. The billions of dollars spent by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, and those juggled by the Federal Reserve Board, have not succeeded in ending the depression. It is not even sure that they have decreased the velocity of the downward movement. The Hoover-Mellon theory that you can restore prosperity by giving money to banks and railroads stands today convicted in the market place as being what most sensible economists have said from the beginning it was—a hopeless experiment, founded on false principles. The only way out of the depression is through increased spending by somebody. The Hoover policy has condoned a decrease in wages

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and salaries of about 55 percent. It has, moreover, blocked the deflation's being logical and consistent, by shoring up certain industrial and financial institutions which should have been reorganized with a lower burden of debt in order to facilitate lower prices and more buying. It is true that government money has kept open some banks which otherwise would have closed; but there is small credit in this when we remember that it is the same government which has permitted a criminally incompetent banking system to exist. Canada, equally hard hit by the depression, and lacking America's enormous resources, has not had a bank failure in ten years, while we have had 4,600. It is entirely possible to argue that we should have been as well off today if the Hoover administration had done absolutely nothing about the depression, except to let "Nature" take its course.

The question before the country, therefore, is: what can best and most quickly be done to enhance consumer purchasing power? There are several possible expedients, with which we cannot deal within the limits of this article. One of the best, however, is also one of the most obvious: a large-scale building program. It so happens, also, that the only type of building the country needs is one which it very badly needs—new housing for the poor.

It will be remembered that Congress last June tried to make possible such a program. It appropriated one and a half billion dollars for public works, including housing projects. Up to now, this effort has been thwarted partly by Mr. Hoover's Toryism, partly by the stupidity of private real-estate interests throughout the country, which would rather starve to death on orthodox principles than see prosperity restored through innovation. Only about one-tenth of the money appropriated by Congress has been allotted, most of it being earmarked for bridges and waterworks in the Far West. For housing, practically nothing has been done.

There is some reason to hope that the Roosevelt administration, which at least is not composed of economic illiterates like the Hoover regime, will take effective action along the lines suggested. In the meantime, however, there is much that can be done in individual communities, both in preparation for the expenditure of federal money and as a supplement to it. An excellent example of what we mean is the plans now under way in Cleveland, Philadelphia, Chicago and St. Louis. Of these, the plan in Cleveland has gone farthest.

In that city a number of imaginative architects, working largely through the Chamber of Commerce, and with the approval of the real-estate interests, have laid out a program for restoring some seven blighted areas and preventing the advent of blight in other districts. The project will cost millions of dollars, since many blocks of slums will be torn down and replaced by modern, sanitary apartments, in which the former slum dwellers will live, paying less rent, on the average, than they do now. This is made possible by large-scale operation and by the fact that land only a few blocks from the shopping district can be purchased for the relatively low price of one dollar a square foot or less. Fifty percent of the land will be made into parks, and the new houses will, of course, be infinitely superior to the present rookeries. Through large-scale operation, new apartments of steel or masonry can be erected at astonishingly small prices. It is hoped that a five-room steel apartment can be built, comfortable, beautiful, enduring, equipped with every modern appliance, to rent for the amazingly low figure of $4 or $5 per room per month.

One hardly needs to say that no project of this sort is possible under strictly private enterprise. Private builders cannot work on a large enough scale to bring prices down to the requisite level. Nothing had been done in the way of new building in Cleveland for people of this social stratum during the last ten years, and practically nothing anywhere else in the United States. Private building interests can therefore hardly complain, in the face of the admitted fact that this is a work they are unable to do and are not doing. The operations in Cleveland will be carried out under the provisions of a new housing law designed to aid such projects. The tax-paying citizens of Cleveland have also no right to object, since these blighted areas at present cost them millions of dollars more than is necessary, for public services, and particularly for dealing with crime and the social maladies which are produced by poverty. These sums will at least be somewhat reduced. The juvenile delinquency rate in one of these blighted areas is ten times as high as in the best part of Cleveland. The murder rate is two hundred and eight times as high.

Such housing plans as this, of course, solve no long-time problems. Poverty is not wiped out by giving the poor cross-ventilation, running hot water and parks. Good housing is a palliative and ought to be recognized as such. It is, however, a palliative which at present can serve not only to rescue the poor from their misery, but to increase employment—for a few years, at any rate. If there is any sensible argument against it we should be glad to know what it is.

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Why Britain Stays off Gold

WHY IS Great Britain reluctant to return to gold? Why, in particular, when she talks officially to the United States does she seem to make a favor of a step which Americans believe to be to her own advantage? She bargains; she poses difficult conditions; she seems to be exacting a high price from creditors on whose generosity she is making other and sufficiently startling demands. One gathers that this attitude has puzzled and irritated American opinion, liberals and highbrows no less than the rest.

Mr. Neville Chamberlain put it roughly, as his manner is, for he thinks and talks without grace or subtlety. His outlook is that of a "hard-boiled" Imperialist. He was personally opposed to the payment of the December instalment of the debt, and on his shoulders will fall the burden of balancing a difficult budget and, it may be, of increasing taxation. For a man in this position charity will make allowances. None the less, he is not in advance of average English opinion on gold.

No one, unless it be Mr. Montagu Norman, is in a hurry to return to the gold standard. Few or none would consent to go back to it without assurances for its better working in the future. A large and growing body of opinion—which includes some able experts, notably Sir Basil Blackett, formerly Financial Member of the Viceroy of India's Council, and now a director of the Bank of England—is opposed to a return to gold at any time or under any conditions. That is the deliberate and reasoned view of the Labor party, formulated in its program. Stranger still, by vote (perhaps a snatch vote) the annual conference of the Conservative party adhered to the same view last October. Several popular daily papers persist in a steady propaganda against gold. We have a few bimetallists, who wish to restore silver; but the general view is against any metallic standard.

The reasons for this widespread suspicion or dread of gold are not at all mysterious. We have had a varied and painful experience of the injury which the gold standard in the actual condition of the world can inflict. Released from it during the War and for a short time after it, our trade throve. The deflation designed to bring us back to it was clumsily managed and inflicted permanent injury on all our export trades, especially coal. It was, indeed, the premature return to gold in 1925 which caused the struggle in the coal fields and led up to the general strike. When the world slump struck us, the generally accepted British view of its causation was that it was mainly a monetary phenomenon. That may be (I think it is) a superficial view, but it does go far to explain some facts that lie on the surface. It was all the more acceptable because it threw upon Wall Street and Paris the main responsibility for the world's misery. Sponsored early in 1931 by the MacMillan Committee on Banking (of which Mr. Keynes was the leading intelligence), it soon became, what it still is, the orthodox British belief. This Committee summed up strongly in favor of gold as the only satisfactory basis for international trade. But it sharply criticized the archaic methods and anarchic behavior of the Central Banks in recent years: it once more insisted, as the Genoa and Brussels conferences had done, on the need for concerted international management; and finally it called for a return (without specifying the actual procedure of reflation) to the 1929 price level.

We had next to live through the months of monetary and political crisis caused by the rash lending of the City of London to Germany. It had borrowed French deposits at 3 percent and loaned them out at 8 percent, and when the French in alarm called for gold, the Bank saw its reserves vanishing. Mr. MacDonald, under the tutelage of Mr. Montagu Norman, risked everything to save the gold standard—the party he had helped to create, the Socialist faith he had professed. To keep the pound on gold he allied himself with the bitterest foes of his party and his class. He spoke at this time like a man in agony, and presumably he really believed that to quit gold meant speedy ruin. None the less, in spite of costly loans, a painfully balanced budget and economies that destroyed much of the patient reformist work at which the Labor party had toiled for a generation, within three weeks of its formation the national government was driven off gold. To suppose that it went off it voluntarily is to misread history. It was dragged off gold.

And now a most singular thing happened. The country felt no shock when it fell off gold. On the contrary, it experienced a brief and slight revival of its export trade. Its example was soon followed by a great part of the world, so that over an immense area sterling was still a general international standard of value. Taught to fear the worst, public opinion now underwent a violent revulsion. It congratulated itself on its happy escape from the tyranny of gold. It vowed that it would be very slow to return to it. It began to pity those who still adhere to it. Looking abroad it saw that the United States has, in proportion to population, perhaps three unemployed for the British two. It realized that in the gold-standard countries the burden of debt, public and private, weighs on industry and farming even more cruelly than it weighs on the British victim. It did not stop to reflect that a revaluation of the gold con-

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tent of the pound would have had the same salutary effect in lightening debt.

But surely, the American reader will ask, Englishmen must wish, some day, to "stabilize" their currency? There lies the main root of the misunderstanding that divides us. Sterling, since we went off gold, has been a model of stability. True, you can never be quite sure from one week to another how much gold or how many dollars it will buy. But remarkably few people ever wish to buy gold or dollars. Those few who do, suffer undoubtedly some inconvenience. What the average man, the wage earner and the housewife experience is a most reassuring stability. The cost of living, if we may trust the official index, varies only by a point or two with the seasons, and stands precisely where it did when we fell off gold. This is one of the most singular facts in the history of civilization. The gold value of the currency can drop by over a quarter, and simultaneously a general tariff can be applied to almost the whole range of our imports, with quotas also on some important food stuffs, and yet the cost of living does not rise. There are several explanations. The retail price level, when we went off gold, was scandalously high, and far above the wholesale level. That gap has narrowed. Again, we draw most of our imports from the sterling area, and to the Imperial part of it the tariff does not apply. Finally, demand, amid the general depression, is low, and the retailer dare not raise his prices. The result is that in fact and for the time being, we have a currency that is perfectly stable for all purposes of the internal market, and stable also in its ratio to the currencies of many of our chief clients.

British opinion tends now to hurl back the accusation of "instability." It is the dollar or, if you prefer it, gold, that has been riotously, cruelly, unstable. What trust can you put in a measure of value which has doubled itself, in terms of goods, in the course of twelve years, and swollen by over 40 percent since the blessed year 1929? For a time, indeed, the propertied and creditor classes might applaud a dollar that behaved in this way, for it enhanced their claims upon their debtors. Pushed to these extremes, however, the gain from this sort of instability is doubtful, for the wretched debtor will sink under the burden and default.

Experience, accordingly, has converted the more active-minded section of British public opinion to a belief in the merits and feasibility of a "tabular" commodity standard. A pound shall always buy the same quantity of a mixed basket of typical goods. Let us abandon all reference to gold, and endeavor to adjust the volume of our buying medium (both currency and check money) to the total volume of goods and services (or, as some would say, of transactions). The banking technique by which this can be done is familiar to theory, and in some degree to practice. The dominant belief (perhaps a somewhat optimistic simplification) is that, within fairly narrow limits, this policy is practicable, and would yield a reasonably stable general price level. One may hold this view, or at least wish to test it, without adopting the extravagances of currency reformers, who offer it as a sovereign cure for unemployment, and ignore both the problems of distribution in every capitalist society and the special difficulty of adjusting the agricultural and industrial price levels. A sober statement of this opinion would prefer to say, perhaps, that if we aim by a managed currency at stability, gold is an irrelevance, and may become a nuisance.

Need I state the case against gold? First comes the doubt whether the supply of monetary gold will expand, year by year, at the compound rate of 3 percent, to keep pace with the normal expansion of production. Second, if the world's chief creditor Powers, and notably the United States, adhere to a high-tariff policy, and will not receive the interest on their investments and loans in goods, must not the world's gold always tend to get congested in Wall Street? If that happens, no gold standard can work smoothly or equitably. Few of us would deny that a well managed international gold standard is theoretically conceivable, and would have many advantages. But the optimists who believe it to be readily attainable are not numerous. It demands, I believe, a measure of international unity and control realizable only in a World Federation. Let anyone read over, for example, the conditions which the ablest of them, Sir Arthur Salter, lays down in "Recovery," and then take an oath, if he dare, to trust this distracted world to carry them out. Will everyone lower tariffs and abandon quotas? Will the French revise their law and theory of currency, which to British and American economists seem a generation out of date? Will public debts be amicably and drastically scaled down, and if this is done, will the American investor, smarting under this painful sacrifice, at once resume on a great scale the practice of lending and investing abroad? Sir Arthur Salter quotes high authority for the statement that two billion dollars must flow out annually from the creditor countries to the debtors, to keep the capitalist system running comfortably, and America must find most of it.

To me these conditions read like a *reductio ad absurdum*. But short of their realization, British opinion prefers on the whole to stay off gold. It may be mistaken: national pride has rallied to sterling: it helps, more powerfully than any Ottawa tariff, to wall in the economic empire. It is possible, again, that the surprising stability of sterling in the internal market is a result rather of accident than of good management. Finally, we have still to reckon with the dictator of the City, Mr. Norman, who may yet impose his will and drive us back to gold. Enough, for the moment, that the prodigal is relatively content among his husks.

H. N. Brailsford.

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Spain: Liberalism in Excelsis

THE UNSUCCESSFUL anarcho-syndicalist rioting in Spain in early January, commonly miscalled an attempt at "Communist" revolution, again brings to the fore the paramount issue of the new republic—its stability. Is the republic safe? Will it survive? Is it not perhaps a Kerensky interlude, to give way shortly to full reaction to the Left? The violence in January was sporadic and seems to have been put down fairly easily, but it leaves apprehension of further disorder in its wake. In Spain itself, when I was there, most people scoffed at the idea of anarcho-syndicalist terrorism on a serious scale, but I imagine they are scoffing no longer. An orthodox Communist revolt in Spain is still unlikely, but the government has had a thorough scare.

Seen superficially, the analogy between Spain today and Russia under Kerensky is extraordinarily striking. A revolution, rather mild in manner, has displaced a rotting monarchy, and a liberal democratic government is in power. Freedom, releasing its customary forces, is in the air. Limited freedom demands more freedom. Left governments are usually forced further Left. Spain, like Russia, is an isolated agricultural country; as in Russia, the peasantry was crushed by centuries of backwardness, ignorance, faulty communications and extreme poverty; as in Russia, virtual feudalism and serfdom throttled the land. The monarchy in Spain was, as in Russia, supported by the pillars of nobility, army and church, all three inefficient and corrupt. Illiteracy in Russia was enormous, as it still is in Spain.

Another point is the excessive receptiveness nowadays in Spain to new social ideas. Never in Europe have I seen so much radical literature everywhere displayed. You can buy Communist, Anarchist, Syndicalist, Trotskyist, Stalinist newspapers at most newspaper kiosks. Yet Spain does not recognize Russia diplomatically, for fear of "propaganda." It is a strange paradox. I had a sheaf of violently Red newspapers in my pocket when I saw Prime Minister Azaña in Madrid; showing them to him, I asked whether the astounding liberty of speech permitted by his government was caused by sympathy to Communist ideas, by contempt for them or by carelessness. He answered frankly that his government certainly was not in sympathy with Russia, so much so that recognition was an impossibility; but that a just measure of freedom was permitted every citizen if only because this was a good safety-valve for surplus steam, like the oratory in Hyde Park.

Now, the analogies between Spain and Russia may be striking, but there are differences too, and some of them go a long way toward impeding a possible Left revolution. Trotsky enumerated a few in one of his Spanish pamphlets. For one thing, there is no war, which is probably an essential ingredient to a successful Communist upheaval. For another, there is not much proletariat to work with, no tradition of Communist ideology, and no strong party organization. Again, Communism does not appeal, *per se*, to the inveterately individualistic Spaniard. Its propaganda makes small inroads on the Spanish worker, already entangled in the doctrinaire web of anarcho-syndicalism, or of the peasant, who has rocks to climb and olives to pick, but few farms which could be collectivized. Again, there is the quality of the present Spanish government.

This is considerable. Don Manuel Azaña, the prime minister, is certainly no Kerensky personally. He is an odd figure, this little-known Senor Azaña, and it is a remarkable government he leads. Theoretically, it is a Left liberal democracy. Actually, Senor Azaña is pretty much of a dictator, wielding power through careful manipulation of a heterogeneous majority in the friendly Cortes. The Cortes was elected only to write the new constitution, and enemies of the regime insist that Senor Azaña is prolonging its life illegally and indefinitely. But it seems to be generally understood that there will be new elections in the spring—when Azaña and his machine are ready for them.

Azaña may not last forever; it would be reckless in any such fluid situation to make long-term predictions. But at the moment he is incomparably the strongest man in Spain. His ideas, moreover, which he is enforcing through the perhaps temporary dictatorship, are likely to prove increasingly popular with the middle masses. He stands for freedom, for education, for enlightened Westernization. He has reorganized the army, dismissing some 14,000 officers; he has built 10,000 new schools; he is disestablishing the Church with a series of amazingly stringent decrees; he has emasculated the nobility and confiscated most of their estates; and he is applying a land reform which so far has not come to much in practical operation but for which there are high hopes. Azaña's government is the sort of thing young liberals in America dream about; it seems to reach the utmost possible social and political liberalism without diving into actual state socialism. It is the Manchester Guardian of governments.

Azaña, new to politics, has no majority of his own; indeed till recently he had no party. He depends on the powerful Socialist bloc in the Cortes, and three Marxian Socialists sit in his coalition Cabinet. I imagine this coöperation will be short-lived. The Socialists, having got almost everything

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they want from his government, prefer to go into friendly opposition. A word about the Spanish Socialists. They are strict Second International Socialists, like those in the Rathaus who control Vienna. They are the strongest and best organized party in Spain, and their trade union, the Unión Generale de Trabajadores, the famous U.G.T., is a sort of Tammany Hall (an honest one) exerting powerful political pressure throughout the whole country. These Socialists, at present supporting the Azaña government, led by Largo Caballero, the Minister of Labor, are distinct enemies of Communism. Caballero has been widely quoted for a remark that "the revolution has not ended"; what he meant was that gradual evolution from the present structure may eventually produce a socialist state. But he is as vigorous an enemy of immediate overturn to the Left as John D. Rockefeller.

Before proceeding to sketch and analyze some of the factors which, despite this liberal semi-socialist government, serve to cause unrest and possible future disorder in Spain, we must make a careful distinction between the two potentially revolutionary groups eager for a Left upheaval. First the Communists. They are newcomers to Spain. Trotsky himself admits their weakness in numbers, their lack of organization and their internal fissures. The Trotskyist Left Opposition party was, until recently, stronger in Spain than the official Stalinist Third International party. None of the communist groups has yet mustered enough strength to elect any deputies to the Cortes. Communism is largely still an underground movement, but there is no telling when a sudden change in the situation might not make it, for the first time, overtly powerful.

Second, the anarcho-syndicalists. At the moment at any rate, the members of this group carry more weight than the Communists, with whom they are continually being confused in a foreign press probably deliberately careless of nomenclature. The anarcho-syndicalists are not Communists. They detest the Communists. They detest the Communists even more than they detest the Socialists, or than the Socialists detest the Communists. The January troubles were anarcho-syndicalist in origin, not Communist. It must be remembered, however, that the Communists have eagerly sought to sow Marxian seeds in the anarcho-syndicalist organization, and whereas the anarcho-syndicalists might not join a communist revolution, the Communists would certainly take advantage of any anarcho-syndicalist revolution as a highly inviting first step toward a general disorder out of which Communism might more easily eventually arise.

The anarcho-syndicalists make your hair curl. Here are some 600,000 workers organized into a huge trade union, the Confederación General del Trabajo, the C.G.T., who refuse—at least their leaders do—to admit that their own organization exists. Here are some 600,000 men, who could, if they wished, possibly force a "legal" revolution in Catalonia, who refuse to vote, or even to concede that an election takes place. They are purely apolitical. This is the theory, at any rate; I have an idea a few may sneak to the polls—a sin—on election day. Some of the members of this formidable union, which would presumably be the basis of their presumptive syndicalist state, even refuse to accept the necessity of having a state. The anarcho-syndicalists are working, presumably, for revolution, out of which some sort of new structure of society would follow. But I searched for days in Barcelona for a syndicalist who would admit to anything further than a project for semi-trade unions exclusive to each industry and entirely autonomous with respect to each other.

The C.G.T. has become, naturally, the great rival to the Socialist U.G.T. Whereas the U.G.T. dates back to 1876, the C.G.T. was organized only in 1910—but it has made great strides in twenty years. Previously, of course, anarcho-syndicalism had existed in Spain; Barcelona has been an anarchist hotbed ever since Bakhunin and the anarchists split away from Marx's first Communist International in 1872. Salvador de Madariaga, the Spanish ambassador to Paris, has expressed the matter with his usual pithiness, describing the growth of the U.G.T. and the C.G.T.: "The evolution of the labor movement in Spain is determined by the interaction of two poles: Madrid and Barcelona; socialism and anarchism; institutions and agitations; political action and direct action."

That the anarcho-syndicalists, with or without secret, latent or eventual Communist collaboration, are a constant source of disorder in Spain is, of course, undeniable; the fact remains that the anarcho-syndicalists have no serious political program or political aims. They are apt, in other words, to produce riots rather than revolutions; local street fighting rather than national insurrection. Strong in Catalonia and Andalusia, where they have bitten deeply into the poverty-blanched, economically isolated peasantry, they are still a negligible quantity in the rest of the country. The government of Premier Azaña has, too, taken a good deal of wind out of their sails by the grant of provincial autonomy to the Catalan provinces. Non-political as they are, the anarcho-syndicalists did flourish by reason of a political issue, namely the fact that Catalonia was suppressed under the kings, so that workers were given double temptation to upheaval: they were promised economic emancipation, and also nationalist freedom. Catalonian radicalism has always had a strong nationalist tinge. Now Catalan autonomy has come, and the syndicalists lose part of their *raison d'être*.

All in all, it is a complex, quickly shifting and very difficult situation. I would not like to risk prophecy. Two months ago I thought that Azaña was safe for as long as he cared for power. Now I am not so sure. Revolutions are apparently easier to start than to stop. Certainly the present

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government has most of the odds now in its favor, and the January rising may in fact mark a quietus to Left reaction. It may even turn out to be a convenience to the government, as was the Sanjurjo affair, on the heels of which the government was able to force through its land-reform bill. But one cannot underestimate the power of 600,000 direct-actionists in Spain, unpredictable, dangerous and permanent. Perhaps the government's best security is its own comparative Redness. So long as the Socialists support it, the Cabinet steals Left thunder by being forced, little by little, to a perhaps accidentally impregnable Left position.

JOHN GUNTHER.

Retrospective Exhibition: Maurice Sterne

IN MANY an artist's case it is impossible to imagine being interested as to when he was born; and, if he would lie quiet instead of painting, we should not be interested in his death. The longevity of painters seems on the whole rather notable, and is due, perhaps, to that special, releasing combination of hand and mind that their art affords, and to the fact, it may be, that their wives are exhilarated with the activity of the artistic social milieu and are embalmed in studio tea. The art dealers know how to use this longevity; for who can deny the publicity of forty years' conversion of time into space? Or if the painter dies earlier, young as it were, which may mean few canvases, the dealers understand that too; he died of glorious dissipation, or extravagance of living, vice in exotic capital letters, if you like, which is our equivalent for the old garret starvations. In the case of one painter I know, a choice example of his art might have been lost had it not been undervalued personally and used for an unseemly first aid, to be found later by a collector modestly behind a wall, and had not art, as is classically admitted, been longer than life, which is to say sketching longer than dysentery. Maurice Sterne is not news, no sign-post of theory that apostolic nonsense may swell itself by. He will not bring any of the rather younger omnisciences either to a misinterpretation of Plato or to a browbeating of the moribund in art criticism. The good, lively painting-saviors have told us in words why they are better; and everyone is grateful for words nowadays, we can think them over or memorize them going in a taxi somewhere to repeat them. In fiction, organs unfortunately stronger than the brains of the novelist have become voluble, hence the obstetrical romances, about as exalted as brassières. All this in paint and books brings on causes, partisanships, headlines and names on patron lists, sends up kites best detected by a tail of chatterers. The sum of this paragraph, therefore, is only to say that Mr. Sterne is not cliché ever panting, ever young. It is therefore interesting to know of his life (rich and varied and profound though it may be) an outline that belongs to his painting and sculpture.

Maurice Sterne was born in Libau on the Baltic in 1878 and came with his widowed mother to America when he was eleven. Two years later he was a helper in a map-engraving house and presently studying at Cooper Union, mechanical drawing with clinging vines of freehand that moved him on to anatomical studies with Thomas Eakins at the National Academy of Design. Then came an exhibition of his own, then the Mooney Scholarship and Europe, with studio visits but mostly the life of the great museums. After that, it was now the year 1908, he went to Greece, the Parthenon Museum, with six weeks at Delphi drawing from the "Charioteer." In 1910 the Berlin exhibition of drawings and etchings won him a place in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum. In 1911 he went to Egypt, Upper Egypt for the most part; then to British India for eight months, four of them at Benares, then four months, in 1912, to Burma, two months in Java, then to Bali—long before the cruise offices so unwillingly conducted so many tourists to see a land that now, alas, the cruise cry goes, is changing fast by foreign contact. In Bali Mr. Sterne made several thousand drawings, mostly with oil on rice paper and long since famous. After this came residence in Italy, an interlude in New Mexico, various exhibitions and prizes, and then a return to Anticoli-Corrado in the Sabine hills. This brings us up to twelve or so years ago; the rest includes diverse successes, among which is the Monument to Early Settlers, the first William A. Clark Prize, the Corcoran gold medal, and so on, together with living again at Anticoli—where he has engendered the virus of an art colony more or less, and where some of the fine fruits of the present exhibition came into being.

Of all this career the present exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art constitutes a survey, some 174 numbers, though that represents only half of the pieces now available, deposited in the museum storerooms. It is amusing to see some of these paintings of thirty years ago, twenty-five years ago, and so on, how they show what Mr. Sterne might have done had he stuck to the spot, or rather the respective spots, he had arrived at. There are

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portraits passable and portraits, if you like, good. They are, for example, better than the good Chases and worse than the bad: in these earlier portraits the disturbing element that was to drive this artist to importance was sufficiently present to mar the ease of the painting sum. There is a "Cain and Abel" with naked young men and proud horses that hints of Géricault, if somewhat thinly, and a girl with a red ribbon in her hair that has been compared to Whistler. It is more or less Whistler, with a richer pigment, a texture like certain Courbets, and a charming restraint and tone in its own right. A distinguished taste in things slightly stale ought to find this picture a comfort in the exhibition's midst. Along with these there is an admirable painting of a girl with landscape, and there are drawings such as should raise one's hair with wonder and admiration. It is admitted very often that no living draughtsman rivals Maurice Sterne. Here we see pure drawings, vibrant life between lines, drawings in a heavier mass, drawings that are Gothic in intense and delicate emotional precision, drawings that have great chic, and drawings that lay you low with the immense imaginative dilation plus an almost immediate concentration and purity in the approach to the subject.

There is not time to mention the sculptures, like the Worcester monument or the Bomb Thrower from the Metropolitan, some of them already well known; but we must note the statue of the girl sitting. It is carved from a block of Greek marble found in the Tiber. (This should not be held against this sculptor as un-Americanistic, a crime already laid on him, but rather against the Greeks as navigators; one cannot carve even an Indian maiden from the shells and fishbones our Pequots dropped in the Sound.) It is a lovely statue, full of this sculptor's power to isolate a space, for example the triangle between and below the rib-cage —as the benighted Anglo-Saxons, in their sense of units and ignorance of cliques, called it—into a unit resting in volume, so to speak, as well as on the surrounding anatomy. There is not time to discuss the long since well known paintings, such, for instance, as "The Winding Path," that hill-town street. It is a badly named picture, for the essence of it does not wind at all; it goes with the straightness characteristic only of the mind, a theme existing in volume, homily and pathos, a sort of Pilgrim's Progress, in an Italian village, but existent only in its spatial rhythm, in the grace, as it were, of air, in a suspension within its own truth, a sort of Franciscan truth of the natural world, such as no Italian has painted and few Italians can read any more. It sees what it sees with the directness of sunlight, but it knows what it knows with a sort of heavenly communicable mystery. It is one of the small number of great landscapes. It is one of those paintings which if the painter himself did not esteem it I should not know where to turn.

There is another sort of compliment due Mr. Maurice Sterne from me. Numerous portraits, so well painted, are to me ugly and tiresome. For example the girl in gray green sitting in a chair, a marvelous rendering of that stubborn virginity—even to the noncommittal legs—that a peasant grandmother in those peasant hills teaches her young granddaughter; or the Lewisohn picture of the girl's head, with its ruddy cheeks, its coral earrings, its commonness of aspect, all so exactly characteristic of a certain Middle Italy and Northern Italy peasant; or the slim-necked young woman with the dark eyes and blue-green dress, however exactly and completely painted. Such as these Mr. Sterne has rendered not with any photography but with such a truth that my revulsion to the originals is so revived as to kill my pleasure in the pictures. This—with small reservations about taste—is indeed a compliment to the painter, though not to myself. The same is true of some of the still-lifes of fruit. In some of these there is a sudden flash of Caravaggio brilliantly remembered. Detecting that ought to flatter my egotism of culture; but does not do so, so tired am I of these wrinkled table cloths (almost sordid with planes and patterns) that so many painters after Cézanne seem to think essential to pictorial appetite. Such confessions of tired prejudice must discount, no doubt, any value in this record; which is a pity, for my excitement at this exposition was almost laboratorical. I will not say I surpassed the axolotyl, with its sudden powers of glandular enthusiasm by which it rushes from itself into being its own grandmother or aunt. But I do claim that I have passed the guinea pig, by feeling in Mr. Sterne's painting that wonderful relation to Pollaiuolo (in the Bali pictures, for example), that clash and web of forms now curiously and finely made Sterne's own, and by seeing his rich movement away from the opposition of flat opaque colors common to so much modern painting. Nor am I the animal to denounce him as un-American in his subjects, not doing, for instance, Mrs. Grant's corsets in a still-life.

One of this painter's gifts is to catch the inner point of the foreign, the Balinese, the moments in Burma, the Indians of the Southwest. He can do the outside, but what he does that really counts must bring the races thus revealed into a pure respect for him that no other painter has received, not even excepting Gauguin, who, with that French alertness of painting insight—though he missed the character of primitive restraint and ritual and finality—set down those Pacific islands with the luscious mortality of whitening melons on their sea-green leaves, in Virgil's phrase, plus the ripe line of a full leaf or a garment, and with such sensuous facility and pointed method that even Paris took him up. To Paris even the senseless must make sense; and if it is not the sense of the senseless, it is at least the sense of Paris. Only in the painting of the Negro girl in the kitchen has Mr. Sterne failed in this racial vision; though his excuse there could be that he was very likely painting from no long acquaintance with the colored race but from one of

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those Northern Negro types that are no better than the whites who embrace them. The face that the Times Square radiations cannot sterilize of its own character must, perhaps, be one done in granite or basalt centuries ago; at any rate it is true that nobody so far has painted the Negro as he is, the easy precision of that mask whose nuance is complicated by the dark coloring and whose aliveness, almost animal, is flexed into a somnolence more alien to us than we know.

Of the unfinished pictures, and of the Bali pictures, there is one of temple worship that exhibits an almost spectacular secrecy of pattern, not possible without a study of Piero della Francesca, I should think, though the Piero in it is almost indiscernible. It is an unfinished canvas; but, apart from the austere grasp of design, it illustrates one of the best items, in the way of motifs, about Mr. Sterne's work. I mean the figures bowing, the inclination toward reverence bodily indicated. Inclination means through its Latin derivation a literal bending toward; influence means a flowing mutually between one thing and another, so that Milton means something very accurate when he drew in the stars by speaking of eyes that "rain influence." There is no use inviting the crime of literacy by dwelling on this. I will only say that I sometimes think it one of the great signs in art. Duse in her acting constantly manifested it, creating thereby a sense of life flowing between her and the dramatic situation, as well as the sense of pure giving out of her own humanity. It is in the best Donatello, in the direct Giotto, in certain humble Gothic sculptures; and, despite the extreme withdrawal into his classic passion, even Poussin could now and again create it—the "Baptism," for example.

Number 57 is the well known "Bread Makers," poignant with all the truth of simple Italian life, one of the great Sterne paintings; it makes all that host of nineteenth-century Anglo-Saxon sketching and painting 'neath the blue Italian skies only like a rosy, balanced gentleman buying flowers in the Piazza di Spagna, swelling with classic antiquity and chucking a race under the chin. A new piece, of a circus in the Anticoli piazza, with its center spot of the arc light, its background of walls, its strangely ancient gay dexterity in the middle foreground, is an admirable painting. The nocturne of it was there before the canvas arrived; the ancient futurity of the town background gives to the bright whirling center its intense poetry of what passes and what endures. The mind behind such a picture is alert, long brooding and beautiful. "The Auction," too, is a painting of great chic, a prose ceiling made to suspend itself above the bidders like a shimmering sky that is the limit, a Forain dash of portraiture and black color, a Venetian lusciousness in places that tells the lure of the objects sold, a kind of sober journalism over all, and everything turned into decoration. The Venetian in this painting brings us to the masterpiece of the exhibition, the large canvas of "American in Anticoli."

There is not space for a right conveyance of this painting, which I think is the peak of Mr. Sterne's work so far and, it seems to me, the most important painting in American art. I am aware, however, how daily this feature of greatness confronts us, from radio artists to novels, skins and poems; it seems better to try a handful of notes, first of all the subject. In this picture we have a large canvas, unusually large as pictures go these days; two peasant women stand, one to each side the nude figure of the bather, who kneels in a shallow foot-tub of the old familiar type. Behind is a wall with an arched opening in the middle space and to the left half an opening. Beyond lies a landscape typical of the Anticoli country.

The base of influence in this painting, so far as there is influence—which there is sure to be in a great guildsman like Maurice Sterne, with his long torment and study, as distinguished from some engineer, say, turning painter—is not discernible to everyone, since there is never quotation but only a form of entrance into another artist's life—tradition, that is, in the final sense. The line, so practised in Florentine painting, so distinguished, so easily at the very least discerned, becomes here in this painting what it became among the Venetians (though they were often too reckless and casual for comparison in this respect with the Sterne picture). There is an effect of saving the form out of the substance—like the articulation of the skull in the fine Leopardi death-mask, which is the basis of its nobility but not it. "American in Anticoli" is closer to Giorgione rather than to later Venetian painters, partly through the manner in which it wins us to the central, pure shape—the bather's figure—and partly by an absence of rhetoric in the presentation that removes our resistance—as moderns especially—to it. The landscape is the Anticoli landscape, seen with some of Cézanne's brush and with some of the early Italians' moods. It is not formal as in, for example, Raphael or Poussin, classic and assured of its *genius loci,* but hill and wood, houses and air that St. Francis might have loved. We know it as Dante knew when he "saw from afar the trembling of the sea." It is, throughout, Italy. It comes into the picture in the guise of landscape that is as if the simple blood were space, and emotion the finality of chiaroscuro, both awaiting the order and design that come only from character and idea.

The two young peasant women at the side are, in a curiously modern form, devotees to the goddess of the nude figure. To all three figures have been given the beautiful, living rhythms of unconscious stillness. The central figure takes its distinctness from the surrounding air, its solidity from itself. It has, therefore, the elusion of deathless form-idea, and the hardness of what will with time decay. Its softness it shares with the soft permanence outside in nature. This clear revelation of it advances, as it were, out of nature. It has the power of substantiating the dream around it.

As painting this picture seems to me to carry

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Mr. Maurice Sterne on forward. Its diagonal sequences, not pursued beyond what was practised in the earlier baroque composition, count toward the rich effect. There is an establishment of relationships that serve for deep symbols of reality. There is a fine balance between paint, which must be a lust, and design, which must be a celestial love. The picture rests on the line-form but dazzles out of it. It has a truly evocative volume. The painter has grasped all through the picture the quality of continuity in volume, a kind of space rhythm; and for the details, figures, walls, objects, he has achieved their concreteness without losing their infinity. In the same way the superb structure of the composition never loses the poem whose bones and posture it is.

STARK YOUNG.

Washington Notes

Patriot Ford—Jitters in Washington—Franklin Goes to Sea—The Dry Repeal—Dictatorial Powers

AT THE moment there is more apprehension, alarm and general trepidation among our statesmen in Washington than there has been since January, 1932, when everybody got so scared that for a week or two partisanship almost completely disappeared and emergency measures like that establishing the Reconstruction Finance Corporation were enacted almost unanimously. Probably in another week or so this fright will have evaporated and relative calm be restored. But right now, in the classic language of the quaint Senator from Kentucky, Mr. Logan, "Everybody has the jitters."

The reasons are simple enough. There is, of course, the Michigan bank situation, which seems to have been precipitated by a conflict between other motor interests and that great patriot, Mr. Henry Ford, from whom in the past we have had a lot of advice as to how we should live and spend our money, but who, according to the Governor of his state, refused to risk part of his own money at a time of crisis. The stories that are told in Washington about Mr. Ford's attitude are literally amazing and the things he is called by people from his own state cannot be printed in this great family journal. I have rarely heard more bitterness expressed by politicians against an outsider. Then, too, there is the fact that the banking conditions in other states are more or less shaky, and "inside information" is that gold has again begun to flow toward Europe and hoarding has been renewed here. There was also the public statement of the tactless Mr. Garner, who is invariably thrown into a high state of excitement by his press conference, that today a man with $100,000 can find nowhere to put it and feel safe. It probably is true, but not much good could come from blurting it out in that way. No thoughtful and responsible man would have done so.

It was a typical Garner statement. He seems to feel that when more than three reporters come at him at the same time, it devolves upon him to say something startling. Likely his remark is forgotten now, but on the day the great Texan leader made it, shivers of anxiety were felt all through the already anxious financial East. Every bank president in the country, after cursing him with earnestness and enthusiasm, shivered with apprehension when the news came from Miami and uttered a deep prayer of gratitude on learning for certain that the assassin's bullet had missed the President-elect.

To continue with the reasons for the alarm, there had been for three successive days a repetition of the dreadful word "revolution" by three Senators and several Representatives. And finally Mr. B. M. Baruch, leading off as the first witness of the 350 summoned by the Senate Finance Committee to express their views as to the state of the nation, had drawn a particularly tragic and gloomy picture of the future. There was nothing except a vague complacency between us and calamity, he said. Only a quickly balanced budget can save us. The present inertia of Congress is trifling with disaster. The exceedingly well fixed Bernie painted a doleful prospect—not too doleful I think—but sufficiently dark to create a lot of foreboding and increase the popular willingness to see dictatorial powers conferred upon the incoming President.

Altogether it was a pretty gloomy week, in which the Reconstruction Finance Board spent one all-night session wrestling with the Detroit problem, and both the head of the Federal Reserve Board and the Secretary of the Treasury were under considerable strain trying to avert a collapse that might have had a shattering effect upon the country as a whole and precipitated all kinds of unpleasant things. There is no doubt that the situation was considerably more tense than was generally known, and Michigan was not the only state to which life lines were cast from Washington.

While all this was going on and officials here, still clothed with responsibility but no longer with power, agonized and sweated, where was the President-elect of the United States, so soon to take over the direction of the national destiny and assume the care of the national welfare? Still out on the ocean blue and resting under the tropical sun, free from care and removed from unpleasant realities, sending back to the press facetious messages about the fishing and enthusiastically declaring Vincent "a perfect host." Under the circumstances, little as I ordinarily share their point of view, I sympathize with and understand the resentment of some of the higher administration men, upon whom the burden fell. Some of the questions with which they were confronted necessitated action that must affect the new administration and which, by coöperation, the new administration could have helped to make more effective and reassuring. Yet there was no possible way in which either coöperation or reassurance could be obtained. Not only was Mr. Roosevelt completely removed from communication, but he had left no responsible representative to whom anyone could turn. No one knew at the time who was to be his Secretary of the Treasury. There was literally no one to whom that unfortunate Hoover group could turn to ensure the continuation of the things they had to do.

I don't wonder they grew resentful, particularly at some of the Wall Street Democratic friends of Mr. Roosevelt, who called up Washington and asked members of the Republican administration to get the President-elect to do this or say that. "How are we going to get in touch with him

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if you can't?" they shot back over the wire. Except for the exceedingly critical nature of the situation, which relatively few appreciated, it was not without its humorous phase, though the responsible people in the outgoing administration were utterly unable to see any humor in it.

However, things seem to have steadied down a bit in the last few days and the Democratic leaders in Congress have been pondering on matters other than the acuteness of the banking situation which so unexpectedly protruded itself last week. A futile and amazingly puerile debate on the Eighteenth Amendment repeal proposal of Senator Blaine consumed days in the Senate, thereby increasing the peril of the appropriation bills and rendering farm relief at this session a trifle more remote than before—and it has been exceedingly remote for quite a while. The passage of the resolution appears to mean that it will pass the House as well. The collapse of the threatened Dry filibuster came as a surprise and the success of the Wets in reshaping the Blaine proposal to take away the constitutional ban on the saloon changed the whole situation. In the end, this repeal proposal and the Philippine bill will probably stand out as the only accomplishments of the session.

Aside from the prohibition furore—and the shock of the attempted assassination of Mr. Roosevelt, the one thing of real significance during the week was the idea of the dominant Democrats to amend the Byrnes resolution, approved by the Senate, which gives Mr. Roosevelt really complete authority when he comes in, not only to merge, consolidate and abolish bureaus and commissions, but actually to abrogate "contractual relations" established by Congress in the form of laws dealing with veterans' compensation. At once there arose from the Republican side loud cries about a Mussolini and the danger of a dictatorship to the liberties of the people. Some of our leading constitutionalists declared that it was proposed to put a torch to the Constitution, and various other objections were raised.

However, back of Mr. Garner's move in this direction lies the undoubted desire of Mr. Roosevelt himself. It develops now that, as far back as that not very successful Democratic conference held in his New York house before he went to Warm Springs, he expressed to a number of those in attendance his hope for just such a resolution as Mr. Garner now advocates. Originally, it was the purpose of Senator Byrnes of South Carolina to go the whole distance in the Senate, but he made the mistake of talking to too many Senators and asking too much advice, the result being that he was afraid to ask for unrestricted power and his resolution fell short of the mark—particularly so far as veterans' compensation is concerned.

The Garner proposal is the real thing and, if it does not go through before March, the idea is to confer the additional powers as quickly as possible in the special session. The plain fact seems to be that, contrary to expectations, and despite the technical objections raised, the public reaction to the dictatorial-power proposal has been a generally favorable one, and this is easy to understand. The incompetency of Congress has been so clearly demonstrated, not only in this session but during the last year, that the repute in which the body is publicly held today is, I think, almost unprecedentedly low. This is particularly true of the Senate. The public proclamation of House Democratic leaders of their belief that Congress cannot be depended upon to order the clearly indicated economies makes it plain that Mr. Roosevelt's and his party's promises cannot be redeemed unless the power for redemption is put in his hands. People generally want to see him redeem his promises and succeed. If for no other than a purely selfish motive, we all, I take it, want that. Hence, the people as a whole will welcome giving him more power and Congress less. It may not be constitutional, but that is what they want—and so does he.

Washington. T. R. B.

Moments of Miracle

Six Miracle Plays. Manuscripts selected and arranged by Natalie Hays Hammond. Guild Theatre, February 5 and 12, 1933.

MR. JOHN CHAMBERLAIN in his "Farewell to Reform," a book, at times brilliant and always absorbing, on the rise, life and decay of the progressive mind in America, has a remark not without application to the case of the miracle plays in the recent production by the Stage Alliance. Speaking of President Wilson, he observes that because of his "anesthesia to detail, the suspicion will not down that he admired the British system, not so much for its flexibility as for the opportunity it provided for a man of presidential timber to take the spotlight. . . ." Sometimes I think it is thus with our theatre: you can do all sorts of things on Broadway—if you have the money—but the charm lies in the chance for the spotlight. This sort of thinking led to some of the attitudes toward the Miracle Plays. What was the idea? How could anybody expect to make a go of such a venture?—meaning make money or a hit. What was the intention? Was it to reanimate these old pieces from sacred and dramatic history? And what was Miss Martha Graham, already established as an important dancer with her own style, doing *"dans cette galère"*? Why, too, if you were going to spend money producing, not put it on worthy American work that had not got a chance?

The first query, about the odd idea of such a venture, derives from the vast wonder of a nation with so much money and so much to go from, if not to go to, that it has not learned to satisfy itself in its own special quality or need by forms of culture. Since life is made up of many elements, is it not conceivable that some of the producers, players and audience have things in them that this production expressed or enriched or, out of an old thirst in a semi-desert, for a moment satisfied? As for reanimating a primitive dramatic form—a process usually academic and self-conscious and pseudo—is it not possible that the living interest in these plays depends rather on their power to reanimate us? As to a dancing already fixed in its style, that can mean only already dead. As to that chance for the American product, where are all these great untried creations, is there some secret masonry of excellence?

The program of the six numbers differed heavily in value and in the production given each. At this point criticism can take root. But in general the roots of the sort of critical thinking that I have indicated lie in one fact: people insist on seeing what they have made up their minds they

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are to see—in this case revived miracle plays; they refuse to take a thing for what it is, reading it in the language it is speaking. With any work of art we must either read the language it speaks, and so judge it, or else know we cannot read its language and so not judge it by what it is not. The language chosen for these six numbers was essentially the dance, sometimes with music, sometimes with the dramatic text supplied by readers at either side. Out of the great volume of miracles and mysteries six were chosen, three of them from French manuscripts, the thirteenth century "La Nativité" and "Les Trois Rois," and "Les Trois Maries" from the eleventh century. "The Miraculous Birth and the Midwives" appears to be an adaptation from one of Hone's "Descriptions"; "The Magdalen" a part only of a play; and a passage from the Chester plays serves for "The Lamentation of the Virgin Mary." I should be disposed to say, also, that there was the miracle of a packed house at the second performance of the program, and that Miss Martha Graham at her best had such moments of grace, delicate profundity and inspiration in motifs poured into her as would in the era of the plays themselves have been counted divine.

Miss Hammond's costume designs were good both where they were simple and where they ventured into a gentle Gothic ornament. In the piece with the two midwives, played by young monks, the squares of brown and white made a fine variation from the usual, and historically later, Franciscan brown, and carried the scene off to some terra-cotta memory, little figures to be adored by peasants in small shrines and rocky grottoes. Some of the designs had the simplicity and stillness of wood; the dress, of velvet in three shades of rose, for the "Lamentation" was that of the Our Lady, the Queen of Heaven. In all the costumes there was nothing arrant; and the degree to which they were realistic and not realistic seemed to me right. Miss Alice Laughlin's settings, almost stage properties they were, always sparse, always pure, were admirable.

The use of readers for the text instead of lines spoken by the dramatic personages I thought a very good scheme. It freed the dancers and mimes from speech and made their conveyance of their matter more flowing and lovely, less checked with the concrete, able the more truly to dance the meaning. It was more as if the simple statues in the choir, or far up on a *reja's* ledge, were there, complete in their own presence, around which the music or the words arose, complete in themselves also, and all three, dance, words and music, running to one single whole. Technically it seemed to me interesting because it served to stress the separate elements that compose a work in the theatre, each one of which by doing purely and tensely what has been assigned to it, is both itself and something else also, like, as Plotinus said it, a singer in a song.

Miss Alma Kruger read the women's lines admirably, only now and then releasing into the reading a personal element that left a kind of emotional sediment outside the miming. Mr. Paul Leyssac read "Les Trois Rois" and "Les Trois Maries" in a noble and perfect French that might well have brought us to our feet. The placement of the tone, the impersonality of the sense, and the progression of the distributed tonic stress would have been somewhat too astonishing had it not been for the perfect suspension of the line as a whole and the infallible taste. The slight foreign tinge to Mr. Leyssac's English reading only served to give it the needed removal, to perfect the scansion, and to develop to their full metrical volume words that our actors, partly from lack of training, partly from our wholesale lack of standard, do little with, such words, for a single example, as those ending in *ble.*

In the work of the players was illustrated one quality that the theatre needs at its core. I have never seen young women and young men playing with such gentle honesty and tenderness as these did, never so whole an absence of exhibitionism or straying ego-mindedness, never so simple a will to do what the moment wanted, which was, of course, largely what Miss Graham had wanted of them. Certainly on those among them who were at all sensitive the pieces themselves must have cast some degree of mood, but it was the teaching and directing of Miss Graham that most gave them that hush, regularity, and absorption without gush. Apart from the strong coaching, it amounted to a kind of spiritual animation entering into them from a lovely and intense mind.

The various numbers came off, as might be expected, unequally. The first was too long without a stricter ritual. "The Magdalen" suffered for want of a Satan not merely young and decadent but forceful in evil, and by its moving too far in the direction of a dance pantomime. Miss Graham's "The Lamentation of the Virgin Mary" was in many parts beautiful, marked with eternally surprising and exquisite motifs, and finding at its close the right tragic knowledge for this woman in whose heart all man's pain was prophesied forever. The middle portion especially of this dance was less good. There is, I think, one thing to say that will find the main source of the trouble. This artist in her experience has not before now danced to an accompaniment of words. She made the mistake of dancing too much to the words' concrete meaning. She should have taken them as she might a stream of music supplying only the substance that she on her part would create in her dance medium. The concreteness of the words does not concern her; it lies within their own special element.

"The Miraculous Birth and the Midwives" and "Les Trois Rois" were the two numbers entirely beautiful. Mr. John Glenn's St. Joseph, so quiet, so uninsistent, like a peasant's *santo,* and so right in movement, was excellent. For the other figures and their encounters in the action Miss Graham had inventions in place, grouping and gesture that were remarkable. Sometimes they were motifs—the Virgin after the doubts and the miracle, laying her cheek in St. Joseph's palm, or the shepherds' breaking into a dance as they moved toward her, or the monk-midwives kneeling whenever the angel passed, circling around the group with the Virgin and child—in these and many other motifs the invention was of a sweetness and imagination for which words can be only silly. The intelligence shown in the handling of the naïve, too, was notable. The naïve, on the stage, so soon as we recognize it as meant to be naïve, is no longer so. The one element out of the primitive naïveté of these plays that can remain a veritable quality is directness in statement, simple faith in the validity of the emotion and action; and this Miss Graham achieved in genuine creation. As to her entrance into a new field, I do not think she has done so. She had already, before this, admitted, as a part of her growth, that there is a great deal

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besides psychological projection of the dancer's self. On days when one's viscera are not at home, there are angels of wonder and life that may visit us from other creations, other spirits. The continuity of thought, forms and beauty is no more to be denied than the continuity of one's biology. The birth of any new living thing is, to a true artist, always torment, but the flower of it has the sweetness for the moment of pause and perfection. And then the torment again and for a moment again the peace. And when all this stops and you are dead, you fatten or teach, or satisfy your critics, or contract a tour. STARK YOUNG.

Not on the Ticker Tape

Wall Street Leaders—Foreign Loans and Budgets —What's Wrong with the Picture—Mr. Loree and the N. Y. Central

AS SECURITIES and mortgages have tumbled toward worthlessness, stuffed shirts have naturally also declined in public esteem. In fact, a disillusioned public is putting a new appraisal on the true size of the big men.

However, there have also been a few recoveries in personal reputations. Frank A. Vanderlip, who was more or less in retirement throughout the so-called new era, has fast been regaining some of his old glory. With business leadership virtually nonexistent, Mr. Vanderlip has formed a committee of about one hundred leading executives who are devoting a large part of their time to the study of the whole situation. The collaborators are nearly ready to make some public recommendations.

A year ago E. F. Hutton, the stock broker, had a similar organization in mind, but apparently did not get to first base. He thought in terms of an Institute of Executives. His first concrete idea was to offer the chairmanship to the late Calvin Coolidge. Mr. Coolidge, it is understood, expressed sympathy with the movement, but indicated that he did not care to take an active part. That effort apparently never recovered from the setback.

Periodically an apologist for the Chamber of Commerce of the United States points to that organization as the proper mouthpiece for business, but it is so large and unwieldy that its usefulness has been circumscribed.

Mr. Vanderlip's forte has always been his willingness to leap into a controversy with both feet and make his position clear. Of late, reviving his old-time skill as a financial writer—he was financial editor of The Chicago Tribune before he joined the National City Bank—Mr. Vanderlip has been indulging in plain talk concerning the need of reform in commercial and investment banking. He not only has a dynamic mind, but is also aware of the social point of view. After he stepped out of active banking in 1919, the Street was dominated by men with static minds who were guided only by the motive of private profit. Now that the skids have been put under a number of leaders of "the bigger and better" cult, the Street is looking more and more for guidance to its elder statesmen like Mr. Vanderlip, Bernard M. Baruch and a few others.

Of course the unanimity of Wall Street ideas exists only in the minds of its critics. Although many in the Street are mere parrots repeating the current slogans about "balancing the budget," etc., I find a diversity of opinion on most economic questions. Curiously enough, the recent doubts concerning the desirability of continuing as a great creditor nation have even penetrated the sanctums of one or two of the famous international banking houses. The left wing, which opposes foreign financing, would rather see defaults on the war debts than cancellation or drastic revision, thinking that defaults would result in economic isolation for America.

On budget balancing, which has hypnotized the mind of Wall Street, there is also some dissenting opinion. One important executive who does his own thinking pointed out that the expenditures of government in the last analysis consist largely of the distribution of wages and interest. Holding that an increase in the gross volume of business in the United States is the immediate goal, he did not see how indiscriminate governmental retrenchment would help the situation.

There is no money trust in Wall Street. In the sense in which the term has been used, a money trust implies a guiding, coördinating intelligence. The lack of such coördinated thinking was reflected before the panic in a vast overissue of new securities, which brought on financial indigestion. Instead of having such strong leadership during the depression, the Street has been rudderless, each so-called big man being too much diverted by his own personal or institutional troubles.

The common ground for the conventional leaders, as has been revealed in the testimony before the Senate Finance Committee, includes balancing the budget, revision of the war debts, tax reform, including the sales tax, and "sound" money.

The absence of coherent planning results in breakdowns in individual cogs in the national financial machinery. The Michigan bank holiday was a symptom of the danger of planless drifting. The fashion of repudiation, as exemplified in the postponement of farm foreclosures and in the scaling down of interest rates on urban mortgages, is another consequence of deflation to the bitter end. In the face of such evidence of the breakdown of "rugged individualism," can serious-minded men still remain hostile to civilized ideals of economic planning and stabilization?

The Senate Finance Committee's investigation into remedies has helped to demonstrate that the insiders too are confused by the trend of events. Jackson E. Reynolds, president of the late George F. Baker's bank, explained: "I am no soothsayer. I have no necromancy. I don't believe in theories or in the omniscient power of anyone to correct the situation." The cynic would comment that in the light of the behavior of his security affiliate, especially in 1931, Mr. Reynolds had to be modest in his claims.

Leonor F. Loree's purchase of a 10-percent interest in New York Central for his Delaware and Hudson Company is analogous to the swallowing of Goliath by David.

Mr. Loree, economic Tory and self-serving corporate exploiter, never fell for the "bigger and better" high-pressure philosophy of the lamented new era. As a matter of fact, preferring solvency to size, he sold out at handsome prices at the right time his company's investments in Wa-

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bash and Lehigh Valley. Likewise, he timed his offering of new bond issues with magnificent accuracy. Accordingly, when defaults, repudiation and insolvency have been in the air, Mr. Loree's company has had the capital to buy at seemingly bargain prices a substantial working interest in New York Central.

Mr. Loree acted with the advice and coöperation of the bankers of New York Central. According to the inside talk of the Street, the bankers felt that a maneuver such as Mr. Loree contemplated would restir the lethargic imagination of investors and add to the public demand for railroad shares. Their guess proved correct.

L. M. N.

A COMMUNICATION

Domestic Allotment under Fire

SIR: The New Republic has given its mildly qualified blessing to the domestic-allotment plan of farm relief on the theory that this device will effect a redistribution of the nation's income in favor of the farmer and thereby so correct the disparity of agricultural prices and other prices as to stimulate an industrial revival.

This desirable objective is to be attained under the terms of the Jones Bill as originally reported to the House of Representatives by placing a tax on the processors of wheat, cotton, tobacco and hogs and disbursing the moneys thus collected in the form of bounties to their producers. The measure of the bounty in a "regular marketing year" is to be the difference between the present price of the farmer's products and their pre-war "fair exchange value." Its purpose is ultimately to restore to the farmer the same real income which he enjoyed before the War. The sponsors of the project displayed their political shrewdness when they placed their emphasis on parity for agriculture as its objective. There can be no question that the farmer has suffered from depression ever since the War; that his position today is even more desperate than that of the manufacturer. The principle of parity, therefore, is well calculated to appeal to the popular sense of fairness.

This mechanism promises to be more effective as a means of enhancing agricultural income than the equalization fee, the debenture and the stabilization activities of the Farm Board which preceded it. These earlier devices tended to defeat themselves by inducing increased production, enlarging export surpluses and inviting foreign antagonism and retaliation. The allotment plan, by contrast, would limit output. Bounties are to be paid only on the portion of the output which is used in domestic consumption. And they are to be paid only to those producers who voluntarily agree to reduce their acreage of wheat, cotton and tobacco or their tonnage of hogs by 20 percent. The plan, therefore, would neither necessitate foreign dumping nor call forth foreign retaliation. Unlike its predecessors, it provides for its own financing. It appears, therefore, to be entirely practicable.

The amount of the proposed subsidy may be roughly measured. Establishment of the pre-war price as the "fair exchange value" of the products in question in the "regular marketing year" would require a bounty of sixty-four cents a bushel on wheat, two cents a pound on tobacco, three cents a pound on hogs and seven cents a pound on cotton. Multiplied, in each case, by the domestic consumption, these bounties would demand a subsidy of $384,000,000 for wheat growers, $14,000,000 for tobacco, $200,000,000 for hogs and $220,000,000 for cotton; a total of $818,000,000. The addition of rice, peanuts and butter fat to the list by the House may put the final subsidy at a billion dollars.

Proponents of the scheme argue that this billion-dollar subsidy will increase the farmer's purchasing power, enhance the demand for industrial products and thus effect the reëmployment of urban labor. "Transferring purchasing power to the farmer," says The New Republic, "may be expected to benefit not merely the farmer, but, in the end, the industrial worker as well." This sounds very much like the discredited home-market argument for the protective tariff appearing in a new guise. There is no alchemy by which the transfer of money to the farmers from those on whom this tax would fall can increase the total purchasing power of the nation. The farmers would have more money to spend. The rest of us would have less. Total demand would stay where it is. The New Republic "cheerfully admit[s] that no great good can come from any scheme unless it leads to a net expansion of purchasing power." Quite so. We cannot end the depression by subsidizing the farmer in the way which is now proposed.

The New Republic professes to believe that millers, packers and other processors may absorb the tax themselves instead of passing it on to consumers. Neither the theory of tax incidence nor the statistics of corporate income support this claim. Can millers and bakers absorb the $384,000,000 tax on wheat? For 1930, 532 millers reported net income on all operations after tax payment of $15,000,000, while 693 reported deficits of $12,000,000. For the same year 1,869 bakers and confectioners reported net income on all operations after tax payment of $95,000,000 and 1,500 reported deficits of $20,000,000. Can the packers absorb the $200,000,000 bounty on hogs? For 1930, 440 of them reported net income from all operations after tax payment of $26,000,000; 298 reported deficits of $12,000,000. Can the notoriously depressed textile industry pay the $220,000,000 cotton subsidy? For 1930, 200 cotton-goods producers reported net income after tax payment of $8,500,000, while 686 reported deficits of $101,000,000. The whole textile industry reported 5,678 firms with profits of $94,500,000 and 8,753 with deficits of $369,500,000. Nor can retailers absorb the billion-dollar subsidy. In 1930, 34,518 incorporated retailers reported net income on all operations after tax payment of $307,000,000 and 44,729 reported deficits of $358,500,000. In general, returns for 1931 show corporate net income cut in half; deficits increased by 50 percent. Over half of the corporations reporting for that year showed deficits. There can be little question that returns for 1932 and 1933 will show even smaller incomes. The billion dollars which the processors are to hand to the farmers to stimulate recovery simply isn't there.

Who, then, will pay the tax? The mass of consumers, of course. The fields which are to be taxed are competitive fields. The tax is to be a unit tax which is to apply to every pound or bushel processed by every producer. It hits

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the marginal firm as heavily as the profitable one. And the presence of many marginal concerns is revealed by the heavy annual deficits listed above. Unless consumers will absorb the entire output at prices which will cover the tax, marginal operators will retire from the field, supply will be reduced and prices will rise. The processes of price determination will ultimately impose the major portion of the burden upon the users of clothing, tobacco, pork and bread.

If we must subsidize the farmer there is a more equitable form of taxation to which we could resort to obtain the funds. In 1931 incomes in excess of $10,000 totaled $4,000,000,000. Their possessors paid taxes of $222,000,000, retaining after payment $3,778,000,000. Confiscation of everything over $10,000 would still leave them $1,700,000,000 and would give the government an additional $2,000,000,000 which it could turn over to the farmers. Incomes, to be sure, will be lower in 1933 and taxes higher, but it is likely that public appropriation of all incomes above $10,000 would still yield the billion which the farmers demand.

Such action as this, of course, is not within the possibilities of practical politics. But it would be fairer, by far, than the consumption tax which is now projected. The manufacturers' sales tax of 2¼ percent proposed by President Hoover was to raise only $355,000,000 and specifically exempted food and clothing from its provisions. The farmer's tax is directly aimed at food and clothing and will entail a burden three times as great. Yet The New Republic, which fought the sales tax, is willing to collect the far heavier tax on necessities, "even, if necessary, from the unemployed industrial worker." Badly off as he is today, the farmer is living in luxury when compared to the urban worker. It may well be asked whether the masses of our people, suffering as they are from unemployment, reduced income and loss of savings, should be forced to pay a tax upon their food and clothing in order to subsidize the minority which lives on the farms.

It is quite true, as The New Republic argues, that redistribution of income might stimulate consumer demand. Radical income taxation and direct relief to the unemployed might reduce unneeded saving and increase needed spending. But it is difficult to see how the transference of income from the hungry laborer to the well fed farmer could accomplish this end. It is true, too, that the various elements in our price structure are seriously out of line. It follows that fixed charges should be reduced, long-term interest rates lowered, mortgages refunded, monopoly prices slashed, public-utility rates brought down, local taxation readjusted, in order that business may be done at a lower level of prices. But here, too, one may question the usefulness of a heavy tax on food and clothing as a means of adjusting the balance.

Entirely aside from its inequitable tax feature, the farm-parity bill raises other objections which are equally compelling. The plan offers incalculable difficulties of administration. It would require a check on the past acreage of farmers (who keep no record of acreage) and a further check on present output. Nor would reduction of acreage, in good seasons, necessarily reduce output. It would require the policing of processors to collect taxes and prevent bootlegging. It imposes new taxes on the processing of silk and rayon and on present floor stocks of wheat, tobacco, hogs, cotton, silk, rayon, etc., which would require collection. It would necessitate the employment of thousands of persons at heavy annual cost to collect these taxes and distribute the subsidy.

The measure would give the Secretary of Agriculture dictatorial powers. It would be his duty to proclaim the "fair exchange value" of each product included and the portion of each used in domestic consumption. He would decree the amount by which acreage should be reduced in the second year of the plan. He would provide for the rotation of crops and for the application of the scheme to farmers not previously producing the goods covered. He would have the power to forbid the use of land withdrawn from the production of these crops for any other use which might lead to the creation of an exportable surplus and to specify in detail the products which might be raised in their stead. Such concentration of power in a single office is without precedent in our system of government.

It is, indeed, doubtful whether the courts would allow the plan to go into operation. They may well reject the bill's assertion that agriculture is "affected with a national public interest." They may well question the conceptions of "fair exchange value" and "fair exchange allowance." They will almost certainly challenge the use of the taxing power to take money from the processors and hand it to the farmers.

If the project can pass the test of constitutionality it may prove to be workable. But it is precisely this possibility which threatens our national well-being. Applied at the outset to four crops, it was extended by the House to seven; will be extended eventually by the familiar process of log-rolling to scores of others. Introduced as a temporary measure, it will shortly become a permanent part of our governmental machinery. Initiated at one rate, successive sessions of Congress will find means to boost the rates ever higher. Once it is in operation the farmer will abandon all efforts to lower tariffs on industrial products. Indeed, the present measure extends the tariff system to cocoanut oil and short-staple cotton and imposes additional duties equal to the processing tax on the importation of all other goods containing the materials covered. The farmers are declaring that they are as much entitled to a subsidy as are the manufacturers. Business leaders, in turn, are supporting the project as a means of preserving their own privilege. The tariff-subsidized manufacturer and the allotment-subsidized farmer will form a plunder-bund which can be destroyed by nothing short of violent revolution. The rest of us—doctors, lawyers, teachers, preachers, actors, barbers, nurses, waiters, clerks, carpenters, miners, engineers, wholesalers, retailers, repair men and government employees—will stand defenseless before a combination of industrial privilege and agricultural privilege grown so powerful that we are unable to break it.

Swarthmore, Pa. CLAIR WILCOX.

[Before discussing Dr. Wilcox's more important contentions, it is necessary to make clear a few minor points. We do not favor the bill passed by the House at this session, but the plan as originally proposed, which differs from it in important respects—particularly as to the commodities included and the method of administration. It should not include peanuts and butter fat, nor should it place

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dictatorial powers in the hands of the Secretary of Agriculture. Also, Dr. Wilcox is mistaken in asserting that we believe the processors may absorb the whole tax. There is little question that they may have to absorb some of it—hence the bitter opposition of packers, millers and cotton manufacturers. But of course the larger part will be passed on to consumers. Now for the difference of theory.

Dr. Wilcox says, "There is no alchemy by which the transfer of money to the farmers from those on whom this tax would fall can increase the total purchasing power of the nation."

Dr. Wilcox apparently does not hold that if mortgages earned less interest, if the prices of steel and railroad transportation and farm machinery were lower, the result would be merely a transfer of purchasing power to farmers from creditors and those engaged in industry, which would bring us no nearer a revival. Would he look with disfavor on a rise in the prices of cotton, wheat and other agricultural commodities without a corresponding rise in the prices of manufactured goods? Yet any rise in agricultural prices, disproportionate to a rise in industrial prices, will transfer income from city consumers to farmers. The logical conclusion from Dr. Wilcox's position is that the prices which farmers now receive must not be allowed to rise.

Dr. Wilcox's theory is based on the assumption that the total of purchasing power is a fixed fund, like the old "wage fund," and that all you can do about it is to change its distribution. Of course that is not true. If it were true, there would be no hope of revival from any depression. As a matter of fact the total purchasing power depends on the amount of production, employment and trade, which in turn depends on the ability of the various elements of the population mutually to buy and sell one another's goods and services, which in turn depends largely on the relationship among prices, costs and incomes.

This proposal to subsidize agriculture by a tax on consumers is different from a protective tariff on manufactures in the following vital respects: It aims to correct an obvious and admitted price discrepancy, not to nourish industries which could not exist or expand without the exclusion of foreign competition. We are not, by this means, trying to help farmers grow enough cotton and wheat to supply the domestic market or trying to transfer to them a demand for crops which now goes to foreign producers. The farmers in question already supply the home market—and more too. We are simply trying to give them an adequate income for their admittedly necessary function. Furthermore, the subsidy is not a fixed one, like a tariff, which stays in force irrespective of price relationships. It grows smaller as the pre-war parity of prices is approached, and disappears entirely when that point is reached.

We do not regard the question of constitutionality as a serious obstacle. Even if it were, the fault would be with the Constitution (as interpreted) rather than with the proposal.

The final objection of Dr. Wilcox—that the plan will be made permanent and abused by the farmers as a means of plunder—is a weighty one. Let him note, however, that this would mean abandoning its flexible character, or setting a different price parity. Such an attempt would be the one which the rest of us should fight. As long as any machinery is set up to control prices and incomes, it will be subject to pressure on the part of interested classes. But what is the alternative? Does he believe in no control, except by "natural" forces? We profoundly dissent from both the possibility and the desirability of that course. Indeed, one of the chief virtues of the original allotment proposal is that it would set up, in every agricultural state and county, a body representative of farmers, consumers and experts, the attention of which would be likely to turn to long-time economic planning for agriculture.—THE EDITORS.]

CORRESPONDENCE

An Argument against Stamped Scrip

SIR: A few brief comments on Professor Irving Fisher's approval of the scheme of an issue of new currency by the United States government [The New Republic, December 21]. The proposed currency would be made legal tender and each bill would have upon it places for stamps, one of which would be required to be affixed by the holder each week. At the end of the year the issues would be redeemed with the proceeds of this stamp tax. I beg to express the following specific arguments against this proposed currency:

1. The United States currency is already the most complicated and unscientific in the world. New forms of money would merely add to the present complexity.

2. Gresham's Law would apply. That is, objectionable or undervalued currency tends to drive good currency out of circulation. Even though the new bills bore the designation, "One Dollar," they would only attain full value after the lapse of a year. The nuisance quality would make this money relatively undesirable to holders and, therefore, it would be spent rather than the bills which are now in circulation. Consequently the new currency would tend to drive a corresponding amount of old currency out of circulation.

3. Whatever the size of the issue, it is clear that a tax of a similar amount would be imposed upon the users of the new currency. This tax would be extremely unjust in its incidence, and far more onerous on the poor than a general sales tax. Postmen and other civil servants would bear a far greater burden relatively than would the wealthier sections of our community.

4. This first step in new currency legislation would inevitably be followed by others. There might be some slight stimulation of retail trade, but such stimulation would be feverish and unwholesome in character. Small retailers might clamor for similar legislation in future; our currency would soon be water-logged.

5. It is undesirable to stimulate retail prices before there is a definite recovery in wholesale prices. Some retail prices are still inordinately high. For example, the charge for electric power and light to the householder. Such rates are widely out of proportion to the rates charged to the users of electricity for industrial purposes.

6. The new issues might cause alarm abroad and adversely affect the foreign-exchange rates of the American dollar and help undo the corrective measures which have been so sanely conceived and initiated by the Federal Reserve System.

7. From the administrative standpoint, one can easily imagine the nuisance quality of the new currency, particularly in rural communities, where it would be difficult and awkward for holders of the currency to have the bills stamped and dated each week. Probably the currency would not be received at full face value; I foresee a discounting process, to the great disadvantage of holders, similar to what has occurred in such cities as have been obliged to pay their teachers and other workers with scrip instead of cash. Here again would be great injustice to our poorer classes.

8. We already have ample supplies of currency. What is needed is an expansion of bank deposits, because bank checks have been used in payment of a very large fraction of all our

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retail and wholesale business. The expansion in bank currency *(i.e.,* checking accounts) depends, of course, principally upon the lending policy of the commercial banks. Bank currency, the most important element in our monetary mechanism, depends upon private initiative.

JUSTIN H. MOORE,
Dean, School of Business and Civic Administration,
The College of the City of New York.
New York City.

Not from a Trotskyist

SIR: Edmund Wilson's articles on Trotsky printed in The New Republic of January 4 and 11 reflect a dangerous tendency among certain left intellectuals who, carried away by Trotsky's brilliant literary eloquence, are confused and wavering.

Wilson, who circulates such ridiculous stories that "Krupskaya is reported to have said that if Lenin had lived any longer Stalin would have had him in jail," and that Stalin "aroused anti-Semitic feeling against Trotsky," accuses Stalin of vulgarity and gossip! If Wilson had taken the trouble to examine the original speeches, statements and other documents connected with the Trotskyist controversy, he would have noticed that practically all of Stalin's polemics against Trotsky deal with theoretical and political issues. It is Wilson's hero, Trotsky, who levels personal attacks against Stalin and slanders the party leadership as a means of covering up his political bankruptcy.

In the one paragraph in which Wilson deals with the theory of "permanent revolution," he exposes his ignorance of the political and theoretical content of the Trotskyist controversy. Both his statement of the theory of the "permanent revolution" and his reference to the theory of "socialism in one country" reveal that Wilson is satisfied with just interpreting abstractly the words in the two slogans with utter disregard for their historical meaning. To state the theory of "permanent revolution" the way Wilson states it is to imply that the two sides in the struggle have been fighting over something on which they both agree, for no Marxist will deny that "the Marxist world revolution is certain and cannot be stopped; that a bourgeois revolution in any country must be followed by a socialist revolution, that a socialist revolution in any one country must be followed by revolutions in all the others, and that in all our political calculations we must count on this being true." This is a very clumsy statement of Marxian theory of world revolution, but it has nothing to do with the struggle between Leninism and Trotskyism.

The central issue of the Trotskyist controversy is the question of the transition from one stage of the revolution to another, and, in its concrete expression, the whole problem resolves itself into a question of the role of the peasantry in the revolution and the leadership of the proletariat in regard to the peasant question. Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution" is an opportunist theory of left and right swing back and forth from a policy of forced transition, of jumping over of stages, to that of defeatist liquidationism. The root of this hysterical zigzag policy can be traced to Trotsky's criminal underestimation of the revolutionary role of the peasantry which lies at the source of the Trotskyist lack of confidence in the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union, which, according to Trotsky, could not be accomplished without the support of a speedy, successful revolution in western Europe. Trotsky lumped together all different strata of the peasantry into one heap as a reactionary mass, and thus failed to grasp concretely the meaning of the alliance of the peasantry with the proletariat. This is the reason why he advocated in the Soviet Union a desperate policy of forced transition by launching a drive against all peasantry without first having won over the majority of them, the middle and poor peasants, to the side of the proletariat. For the same reason, Trotsky took a defeatist-liquidationist position after the defeat of the Chinese revolution in 1927, absolutely ignored the growing agrarian revolution, issued the backsliding "left" Kuomintang slogan of "national assembly" and branded the Chinese Red army as "bandits" and "ruffians."

The line of the party leadership in the controversy, summarized in the slogan "socialism in one country," implies the party leadership's unshaken confidence in the revolutionary possibility of the majority of the Russian peasantry and the ability of the Russian proletariat to solve the peasant problem without waiting for a successful revolution in western Europe. It also implies that the party leadership shares Lenin's belief that Russia possesses "the necessary material prerequisites" for a successful upbuilding of socialism, and rejects the gloomy defeatist perspective of a helpless Soviet Union in case of a delay of the world revolution.

To deprive such a theory of its concrete historical meaning and interpret it as an impossible attempt to build up an isolated Utopia is not only inaccurate, but exposes the author as a careless writer, unworthy of the reputation of Edmund Wilson. The theory of "socialism in one country" is not an abstract theory, but the formulation of a policy on the basis of a concrete historical situation. History in the last five years has proved the validity of the theory and the correct line of the Stalin leadership, and no amount of ink from Prinkipo or Greenwich Village can alter the fact of history established and fortified by the final verdict of empirical confirmation.

R. DOONPING.
New York City.

To the Friends of Randolph Bourne

SIR: Many of your readers must retain some recollection of the late Randolph Bourne, critic and publicist, who was a contributor to The New Republic in its early years. I am gathering material for a book about him and would be most grateful to any who would pass on to me their memory of him. Letters should be addressed to me at 48 Spruce Street, Bloomfield, New Jersey.

Bloomfield, N. J. DOROTHY TEALL.

Prison Camps for Homeless Boys

SIR: The army of wandering boys continues to absorb the interest of social workers and the public in general. That the situation is serious cannot be denied, although its seriousness consists in its nature rather than in its magnitude. No convincing statistics have yet been presented to indicate how large the army is. The popular estimate of 300,000 may be far below the fact. On the other hand it may represent the registration of the same boys in several places as they drift rapidly across the country. At the Senate hearings in Washington a few days ago witnesses seemed to agree that these boys are not homeless, that they are typical of American youth, and that transiency is a symptom of fundamental social disorders rather than an evil in itself.

Persons experienced in caring for these boys agree that the policy of passing them on from city to city aggravates the situation and that some method must be developed to check the aimless drifting which, if pursued, is sure to result in the spread of disease and in character disintegration. One difficulty appears to be the reluctance of states and cities—overburdened with local problems of relief—to offer more than passing assistance to those whose residence is elsewhere. For this reason there has developed a general agreement that substantial federal aid must be provided.

As for the plan of treatment, wide differences are expressed, the most extreme being the suggestion that a few large unused army cantonments could be appropriated where these boys could be gathered, thirty to fifty thousand in a place, after being apprehended, fingerprinted and properly registered, and where they could be detained under strict discipline until the depression is passed. The plan contemplates an educational, health and recreational program designed to develop habits of thrift, industry and good citizenship. With no disposition to impugn the motives of advocates of such an extreme policy—because these boys will be virtually prisoners—we believe a single question will reveal its fallacy. Suppose one of our American boys placed in such a cantonment is dissatisfied or gets homesick and decides to leave and the camp guards pursue him to bring him back and he refuses to stop—will they shoot him?

No plan of mass treatment and no wide departure from well recognized standards of social case work will do otherwise than bring added confusion and aggravate the evils it seeks to cure.

OWEN R. LOVEJOY, Secretary,
New York City. The Children's Aid Society.

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Crisis: The Communist View

The Coming Struggle for Power, by John Strachey. New York: Covici-Friede. 399 pages. $3.

THE LITERATURE of the crisis has grown almost as immense and confusing as that of the World War. And even the most thoughtful of the contemporary economists, including the English ones who write with so much charm, have not helped things, since they have always tended to analyze or prescribe in terms of the existing capitalist economy. Yet despite their touching unanimity of faith the economic doctors have, as a rule, urged two opposing methods of treatment. They have, on the one hand, advocated the more or less complete return to laissez-faire, which, like Christianity, "has never really been tried," and probably will no more be tried in the future for equally good and sufficient reasons. Such a policy, at any rate, is intended to eliminate as nearly as possible government control, social services and all restraints upon business at home or abroad, so that the free market might function at last. The opposing camp of economists has urged more rigid, more universal control and centralization, with the intention of bringing about a planned or "organized" capitalism, and ultimately a pacific—if possible!—ultra-imperialism. The serious conflict in the judgment of the doctors is well reflected in the dilemma of the great capitalist states, which are actually attempting to pursue both of these policies at once.

In his own contribution to the literature of the crisis, Mr. John Strachey has given us, in reality, not a picture of "coming struggle," but the sanest, the most intelligent apologia for Communism that has been written in many years by any Western thinker. It is his strength that he views the crisis of capitalism as if from some point outside; figuratively, in the "one-sixth of the world's area" which has already embraced a totally different economy. His hypothesis is, of course, the illuminating one of Marx: that the economic crisis is "the inevitable consequence of the essential features of capitalism." But to the testing of this assumption on all possible grounds, he brings a tenacious logic, a painstaking knowledge of capitalist theory and its (necessitous) stratagems that is still too seldom found in Communist writers.

Mr. Strachey, it is worth noting, defines himself as a bourgeois intellectual; a son of St. Loe Strachey and cousin of the inimitable Lytton, he writes with the literary felicity that besides being a family tradition, apparently, is also part of the artistic tradition of English political economy. His conversion (to the duty of "mastering the historical movement as a whole") comes after some years of public life, as a member of Parliament and of the British Labor party. Thus he is especially equipped to disarm and persuade the middle classes, to whom his book is really addressed.

To demonstrate that the trouble with capitalism is—capitalism, Mr. Strachey takes the exhilarating method of drawing mostly upon evidence furnished by his adversaries. In reviewing briefly the past history of industrialism in England, through his opening chapters, he employs with fine effect the Tory historian, Trevelyan. So, in dealing with the theory of the present crisis he gathers from the most eminent capitalist economists, J. M. Keynes, Sir Arthur Salter, Sir Josiah Stamp, the mass of his testimony. Patiently he pursues all their proposed solutions or reforms, however devious or elaborately dire they may be, step by step to their logical absurdity and confusion.

The argument is carried on with the utmost closeness of grip; it is often too detailed and intricate to be reproduced here with any approximation, though always fascinating enough, and never beyond the grasp of the lay reader. The upshot of it is—I must refer the reader to the debate itself in Chapters V, VI, XII and XIII of Mr. Strachey's book—that at the present period of the world's history the proposed measures for restoring health, strength and beauty to the leading capitalist states, which are now silently engaged in deadly struggle with each other, while divided within, seem to lead nowhere if not, through further difficulties, hazards, privations, to ultimate collapse. The various controls urged for instance by J. M. Keynes and others, the devices of "equilibrium economics" designed to stabilize money, "tame" the market or bring about a parity between savings and spendings, between the making of capital goods and the making of consumer goods, all these flimsy safety-valves would be blown off by each successive explosion of an inherently unstable productive system. Mr. Strachey's criticism of Keynes, in its essence, is that the crisis is non-monetary, yet Keynes would attempt solely monetary reforms.

Even more devastating is Mr. Strachey's discussion of National Planning, which he considers to be another name for what is also called Organized Capitalism, Ultra-Imperialism or Fascism. For those who pin their hopes upon some form of the Trust State—and their number embraces the most humane and liberal-minded as well as the jingoes—he evokes the picture of a world of "internally monopolist, ferociously bellicose slave-empires." The result of such planning, when divested of its intellectual disguises, as in Hilaire Belloc's candid appeals, is "capitalism . . . in its last and most monstrous form," with an owning and *spending* class living upon *forced labor*. For how else is the assignment of work and wealth to be made, save by force? And how is the issue between the divers organized economic empires to be settled save by wars far more unpleasant, efficient and scientific than the last war? As for the emergence of a World State such as liberal capitalists dream of, Mr. Strachey is scarcely to be blamed if he concludes, in the year 1932, that the tide is running the other way. The proofs which he gives as to the immanence of new imperialist wars seem alarming and desolating enough.

The most brilliant and also destructive part of his book is that in which he complements his attack upon the economic theorists with illustrations of the actual working of capitalist statesmanship in England during the last few crucial years. Here, in the later chapters, is the "low-down" on England's National Government, the real story as no one has yet given it, observed at close hand and recorded with an irony reminiscent of the author's late distinguished cousin. One has the picture of an Empire—whose reserve strength must not be underestimated—"on the defensive," and Mr. Baldwin, as usual, seeing to it that nothing should be done about anything; Mr. Baldwin working adroitly through the Social Democratic party of Mr. MacDonald; and Mr. MacDonald and the other Laborites literally trembling lest they should win an electoral majority and be compelled to carry out promises given. Here, then, is the tragi-comedy of a late phase of capitalism in which Social Democracy is called to do capitalism's dirty work: economy, policing, colonial repression, reduction of "doles," all.

Mr. Strachey's informed disgust, his sweeping negations, bring him logically to the credo of Communism as the social principle by which alone "human civilization can be maintained and developed." He champions Communism, not with the imputed envy and vengefulness of the Have-

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Nots; for him it is not so much a question of undoing the Haves as of employing properly the machinery, technology and learning which capitalism, in effect, uses too poorly. For in the Marxian view of history, capitalism represents a necessary phase, indeed, a superb era of accomplishment, but one that is ending.

Today the economists of capitalism are like architects who have been called in to repair an old house which has begun to creak, to warp and to sag perilously in all its parts, so that the roof leaks, the windows stick and the doors are awry. Each architect's careful scrutiny discloses fresh weaknesses; each device of support or alteration necessitates further buttressing or remodeling. In the end the house will probably collapse. Or, if it stands, it will be virtually another house built over and round the old one by a most costly procedure. Yet out of inertia, or simply an unscientific respect for antiquity, the more wasteful procedure is taken.

Mr. Strachey is an architect who examines the house of capitalism earnestly and scrupulously; and then prescribes that it be razed and a new edifice reared in its place.

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON.

Science and Modern Thought

The Natural Sciences: An Introduction to the Scientific Philosophy of Today, by Bernhard Bavink. Translated by H. Stafford Hatfield. New York: The Century Company. 696 pages. $7.50.

THOUGHTFUL people everywhere have been swept by a wave of rising interest in "the new science," which is in reality the beginning of a philosophy based on the rapidly increasing body of facts ascertained by scientific investigators. For these people, and not less for the scientific expert whose highly restricted professional environment makes him feel the need of temporary escape from the confines of modern specialization, Bavink's book is intended. It constitutes an attempt to express in simple form the chief results of scientific investigation, and then to evaluate their philosophic significance. The inductive character of the work is one of its chief distinctions, and makes the author's arguments easy to follow.

It would be manifestly unfair to criticize the author for not being equally familiar with all of the modern scientific disciplines; on the contrary it is extraordinary that any one individual shows himself so generally at home amid the vast assortment of facts and concepts supplied by physics, chemistry, biology, geology, astronomy, mathematics and the social sciences, with which he has to deal.

He places the sciences in two groups: those concerned with force and matter in general (including physics, chemistry and mathematics) and those which apply the resulting facts, laws and methods of approach to specific groups of objects—as geology, for example, applies them to the problem of the Earth. The author's exposition is based on this grouping. His principal subjects of discussion are called Force and Matter, Cosmos and Earth, Matter and Life, Nature and Man. In other words, he begins with physics, chemistry and mathematics, proceeds to astronomy and geology, then through biology to the social sciences, and ends with the strictly philosophical problem of values.

A student interested only in the facts and laws of science could go through the book and gain from it a very fair idea of the fundamental problems and the present status of knowledge in each science, without entering at all into the realm of pure philosophy. This fact is in itself a tribute to the author's organization and clear phrasing. But the core and chief strength of the work lie in the way in which philosophical implications are continually brought out. The philosophic treatment of the law of entropy may serve as a simple example. The author shows that many Christian apologists have argued from the statement in this law that free energy continually diminishes in every finite closed system of bodies, that the universe is approaching certain "heat death"; that because this event has not yet occurred, the system cannot have existed from infinite time, else the end would have come before now. But the indirect proof of special creation, toward which such an argument leads by deducing finiteness in time, takes no account of possible infiniteness of space, which is another matter altogether and yet necessarily fundamental to the problem.

A few of the many topics are the nature of the galaxy, the origin of the solar system, the problem of heredity, causality and purpose, the origin of man, and brain, soul and consciousness. Through the whole discussion runs the healthy and undogmatic view that "scientific investigators are everywhere dealing with processes fundamentally capable of investigation, though certainly forever beyond the reach of complete and exhaustive knowledge."

The entire discussion appears to be unbiased and detached. The author is able to throw himself into a highly stimulating discussion of such immediate ethical problems as birth control, the destruction by man of weaker forms of life, and the effect of modern technology upon the mind and the spirit, and then withdraw to the cosmic spaces and argue against the contention of Wallace that the Earth and the life it supports are unique in all the universe—that "only a whole universe of fixed stars is good enough to render possible, upon a single planet of a single one of its members, the development of a human race with its history and intellectual culture." Bavink's reason for believing otherwise is that "the means used would appear to be altogether disproportionate to the end; even if we are willing to admit that the development of mental life, as we know it in ourselves, certainly cannot be measured with the measures of physics, and that a single Newton must be regarded as more valuable than a whole planetary system consisting merely of heavy bodies."

Bavink's contribution has a scholarly importance that will arouse interest in the scientist, in the philosopher, and in the amateur for whom both science and philosophy have a genuine meaning.

RICHARD FLINT.

The Austrian Woman

Marie Antoinette, by Katharine Anthony. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 309 pages. $3.

AN APPROPRIATE subtitle for this engaging biographical study would be "A New Deal for Marie Antoinette." Whatever her faults—and they were more plentiful than Miss Anthony believes; whatever her mistakes—and a long supplement could be written to the author's account—Marie Antoinette was doomed through no choice of her own to a miserable existence which was terminated in the final tragedy on the Place de la Révolution. If for no other reason than that Miss Anthony makes this elemental fact of human misery the motif of her biography, her account is both artistically valid and psychologically sound.

The last of Maria Theresa's large brood of dukes and duchesses, Maria Antonia Josepha Johanna (later gallicized into Marie Antoinette) never had a chance. Spending her

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earliest years with her nurse and then her governess, she was betrothed and married when only fourteen years old to the dauphin of France, the future Louis XVI. The child wife, the innocent victim of her august *maman's* policy of dynastic matchmaking, was an unwelcome and forlorn alien in the court of that antique lecher, Louis XV. The king's sisters cabaled against her, the monarch ceremoniously insulted her, and that "pillar of lethargy," her husband, unceremoniously behaved toward her in a way that was "as strange as it was indecent." Alone, with only two professional diplomats to befriend her (for professional reasons), snubbed and snubbing in turn, she cultivated various court intimates of not unimpeachable standards and sinned innocently against the sacred code of etiquette. Grown older and harder in court manners, she adorned herself with jewels, spent her days with her dressmaker and her nights with her gambling companions. Her enemies made the palace unbearable, so the queen sought refuge in her rustic retreat at the Trianon—and for that, too, she was blamed. After eight years her marriage to Louis XVI was consummated and she became a mother. But her children, so the account runs, were turned against her and she did not know the meaning of love until the young Swedish nobleman, Axel Fersen, entered her life. With him, after a long wait of four years and in very circumspect fashion, Marie Antoinette experienced happiness, but not for long. Tragedy stalked her, in the humiliating scandal of the diamond necklace, in the pre-revolutionary disorders, and in the hurly-burly of that great upheaval with its many horrors that finally led her to the guillotine.

This, in brief, is the story that Miss Anthony tells, simply, without blandishments, without any attempt to win sympathy for her heroine by tugging at the heartstrings of the reader. Her effectiveness lies in that very economy of emotion, in the sheer simplicity of her writing. By placing Marie Antoinette in the center of the stage of her times the author, as biographer, is artistically correct; but that merit has its defects in that it condemns her to a basic historical inaccuracy, which is expressed in terms of false emphasis, mistaken judgments and erroneous suppositions.

Pascal's famous reference to the length of Cleopatra's nose as a historical determinant finds its counterpart in Miss Anthony's statement that the course of the French Revolution might have been different if Louis XVI had kissed Marie Antoinette in time. Perhaps kisses were different in the eighteenth century. What Miss Anthony regards as the queen's wisdom and the king's stupor immediately after the capture of the Bastille was more likely an instance of Louis XVI's courage and Marie Antoinette's panic. What disposal would the author make of the count of Provence, the count of Artois or the duke of Orleans, when she remarks that "in the whole royalist party there was not a suitable regent, save Marie Antoinette"? To link resurgent Calvinism, hatred of the queen and the movement of the revolution in one chain is something of a *tour de force,* but strangely unconvincing. Louis XV was no paragon of virtue and Louis XVI was no Lord Chesterfield, but it is difficult to see how Marie Antoinette's stature is elevated by making them worse than they were. Miss Anthony's defense of the queen's plan for an armed demonstration of the allied troops at the frontier of France does not explain or justify the recklessness of the proceedings; and there is no mention anywhere in the book of the fact that Marie Antoinette betrayed war secrets to the enemy. The author delicately leaves unsolved the question of the queen's physical relations with Fersen. Discussing the attack upon the château at Versailles, she asks the question *"where"* did Lafayette (the commandant of the National Guard) sleep during the night of October 5-6, 1789. Would it be indelicate to ask where *Fersen* slept that night?

These faults are no doubt very grave; but it is more than likely that Miss Anthony's readers will overlook them in a narrative told with such affectionate tenderness, grace and tact.

LEO GERSHOY.

A Handbook for the Times

Insuring the Essentials: Minimum Wage Plus Social Insurance—A Living Wage Program, by Barbara Nachtrieb Armstrong. New York: The Macmillan Company. 734 pages. $5.

MRS. ARMSTRONG has written a handbook for the times. With comprehensive detail and scientific precision she has compiled the experience of the world on the central problem of our contemporary industry and life—the problem of obtaining for "free labor" the elemental right to sheer physical existence. Mrs. Armstrong does not maintain, as no student of social affairs would maintain, that the minima of standard wages and social insurance offer final or complete solution. All she urges is the social organization of a minimum economic security, which the wage system denies the individual worker.

That such security can be organized is proved by the experience of more than sixty years and as many countries. The thoroughness with which Mrs. Armstrong has collected the evidence carries overwhelming conviction. It is a historic record she presents, culled out of every reliable printed source by six years of obviously painstaking labor, and brought through the year 1931. A series of excellent charts, both in the text and in the voluminous appendices, summarizes pictorially the massive detail of the story. The whole portrays in finished form the effort of the industrial world, usually led by Germany (in one or two attempts by Britain and Australia), to provide a wage bottom below which no individual livelihood may be forced by sweating employers, and to assure a minimum economic security against illness, work accident and disease, old age, invalidity, survivors' dependency, involuntary unemployment.

The conclusions pointed by the record should give strong impetus to the agitation by which the United States may be made to "catch up" in this field with other nations. Our backwardness appears throughout the record, and it is hard not to echo the implicit shame for it which surprised Mrs. Armstrong into contrasting our provisions against old age, for instance, with those granted "in more civilized portions of the world." But the stress of the past few years is unmistakably impelling us along the main-traveled roads of social insurance, roads traveled both by Soviet Russia and by capitalistic countries in quest of a present-day minimum security for all men.

By following so late in their footsteps, we have for our guidance certain milestones of their journey. For instance: In every form of insurance, in every individual country and over the world as a whole, the trend moves unmistakably from the voluntary system to the compulsory. Contributions from employers as well as workers, and at times from the state, too, seem essential to an adequate insurance system. Relief should be separated, as much as possible, from insurance. This does not seem to require in Mrs. Armstrong's view any segregation of those unemployed more than a specified time from the insurance rolls to those of relief. As long, she argues, as society cannot provide jobs

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for them, normal workers are entitled to maintenance "as of right." It is rather the relief *problem* that must be sharply differentiated from that of insurance. The "atypical" case of dependency, arising out of what social work terms individual maladjustment, belongs to relief and its techniques; the "normal" risks of industry and human living, to insurance. Within each type of insurance, finally, experience indicates certain essential provisions which must, sooner or later, be incorporated into any law designed to meet adequately the specific risk in question.

Mrs. Armstrong has provided a useful reference book for classes in labor problems and social legislation, and for practical reformers. These groups will of course read it and consult it constantly. But it is those in control of business and industry who need most to study and be moved by this solid and factually persuasive book.

B. M. SELEKMAN.

Lloyd George's Liaison Man

British Agent, by R. H. Bruce Lockhart. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 357 pages. $2.75.

WHEN THE Russian revolution broke out, the Allied nations were at two disadvantages: they were preoccupied with their struggle against Germany and therefore could not take the trouble to understand the revolution which had taken place, and they were represented in Russia by men whose vanity made them more adventurous than keen.

R. H. Bruce Lockhart had been Acting Consul General of Great Britain at Moscow before the War and the revolution. After the Bolsheviks seized power, he was sent back to Russia by the Lloyd George War Cabinet on an indefinite mission and with indefinite authority. His telegrams were sometimes unanswered and his opinions were almost always ignored. His book is an account of this phase of his life as well as of his earlier career in Moscow and in the Malay States. If the story is interesting and revealing, it is because of the events in which Mr. Lockhart played a part rather than because of any power of his own to tell it or any special reaction to the events he witnessed. He does not even succeed in giving an intimate revelation of himself, in spite of the stress he places on his affairs of the heart.

Lockhart had a curious ability to understand the underlying causes of the revolution, and a still more curious inability to act upon his understanding. His girl friend, Moura, summed him up accurately, as he admits: "Months before, when we had had a slight altercation about a question of principle, Moura had described me as 'a little clever, but not clever enough, a little strong, but not strong enough, a little weak, but not weak enough.'" For instance, Lockhart could make the very sensible observation that the only revolutionary party which could endure in Russia in 1917 was a party which brought peace, and then he could turn around and sanction and abet the Allied intervention in Russia for the purpose of forcing the Russians to continue the War. He admits his own folly, but the admission does not excuse him for not resigning when his government decided against his own advice and belief to send an interventionist force into Russia. His desire for personal adventures seems to have been more powerful than his principles in the crisis.

Lenin, Trotsky, Chicherin, were willing to play with Lockhart, just as they had been willing to play with Raymond Robins and William C. Bullitt, because at the moment the menace of German militarism was greater than that of Anglo-American capitalism. But Lenin had no illusions:

> Our ways are not your ways [he told Lockhart]. We can afford to compromise temporarily with capital. It is even necessary, for, if capital were to unite, we should be crushed at this stage of our development. Fortunately for us, it is in the nature of capital that it cannot unite. So long, therefore, as the German danger exists, I am prepared to risk a coöperation with the Allies, which should be temporarily advantageous to both of us. In the event of German aggression, I am even willing to accept military support. At the same time I am quite convinced that your government will never see things in this light. It is a reactionary government. It will coöperate with the Russian reactionaries.

Mr. Lockhart, unlike Lenin, was a sentimental optimist: he thought that he could persuade Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Balfour to coöperate with Lenin whom they regarded as a German spy and with Trotsky whom they had arrested as an undesirable immigrant. It is to Lockhart's credit that he tried to persuade the obtuse British Foreign Office that it was better to assist the Bolsheviks against the Germans than to assist the Denikins, Kolchaks and Yudeniches against the Bolsheviks. But when his advice was not followed, Lockhart followed the flag and ended up as the symbol in Moscow of the counter-revolutionary, interventionist foreigner. Also, in his effort to understand the Bolsheviks he became completely discredited with his own Foreign Office. His story is valuable for its sidelights on the Bolshevik leaders—Trotsky in particular—and on the oscillations of British policy toward the new government. It is hard, however, to sympathize with Lockhart as he reveals himself here; his vanity seems always greater than his insight.

M. R. WERNER.

A Hundred Doughboys

Company K, by William March. New York: Harrison Smith and Robert Haas. $2.

THE IMPULSE that led John Dos Passos to write of three soldiers rather than one has led William March to write of more than one hundred soldiers. It is, of course, the impulse that lies behind most experimental novels, with their various devices for indicating the complexity of experience in the modern world. The simplicity of March's solution of the problem is made possible by the nature of his materials: because his hundred men all belong to the same company, their experiences, though greatly varied, follow a general pattern, and by virtue of that fact the unity of the book is assured. Each of the soldiers tells of some incident, and thus we follow the company from training camp to France, and the last of the sketches bring us back to America after the War.

"Company K" immediately takes its place with the two or three first-rate American novels about the World War. And it is not merely description: whether the soldier who speaks tells of some stupid practical joke or describes the action in which his life was lost, whether he is a hard-boiled professional or a bewildered pacifist, he offers his testimony against war in general. The most striking passage is that which describes, in the words of six different soldiers, the shooting of a group of German prisoners. But we are not likely to forget the sharpshooter who boasts of hitting nine men out of a possible twelve, the private

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who rejoices over the loss of a leg, the soldier who tells of the theft of a copper plaque from an old French couple or the lieutenant who confesses that his stubbornness killed four of his men. Even trivial incidents—the eating of the dappled fawn, the seduction of Private Wadsworth, the salvation of Lieutenant Bartelstone—have their effect.

March's own attitude is indicated by a kind of prefatory sketch, in which Private Joseph Delaney, speaking as if he were the author of the book, describes the War as "an unending circle of pain," and says, "God is so sickened with men, and their unending cruelty to each other, that he covers up the places where they have been as quickly as possible." Even more revealing, and much more poignant, is the description of the man who, dying in torment on the wire, is troubled most by the thought that his body will be taken home and preached over: "The mayor will be there also," he thinks, "pointing to my name with his thick trembling forefinger and shouting meaningless words about glorious deaths and fields of honor. . . . And there will be other little boys in that crowd to listen and believe him, just as I listened and believed." He throws away his identification tags, crying, "I've beaten the orators and the wreath layers at their own game. . . . I've beaten them all. Nobody will ever use me as a symbol. Nobody will ever tell lies over my dead body now." The sketch is called "The Unknown Soldier."

There is no way, March says in this sketch, of defeating human stupidity. And anyone who has read the stories in which, prior to the publication of "Company K," March had indicated the magnitude of his talents, will recognize that this note of futility is characteristic. On this ground March is comparable with Faulkner, but he is better balanced, more objective, and perhaps more conscious of the basis of his defeatism. One notes that in two of his stories ("George and Charlie," published in Pagany, and "Happy Jack," published in Story), he deals with the ineffectualness of all protest against the existing order. This awareness seems much more encouraging than Faulkner's blind confusion. March's pessimism is obviously the product of his wartime experiences, and perhaps his having said his say about the War in "Company K" will modify his attitude. In any case, he has written a moving book, and we shall await its successor with considerable eagerness and some apprehension.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

Book Notes

AMERICANA

FORT HALL ON THE OREGON TRAIL, by Jennie Broughton Brown. *Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers. 467 pages. $2.50.*

Near the lava canyons of the Snake River in Idaho where the Three Buttes were to become a beacon for travelers, Fort Hall was established in 1834 by a Yankee trader, Nathaniel J. Wyeth, in order to outwit some members of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company who had, as he thought, cheated him. The post rapidly became a focal point for the many forms of westward movement. For a time, until the determination of boundaries, the post was held by the British, who were hospitable to trappers, explorers, immigrants. When the Oregon trail began to attract attention it became a crossroads with radiating trails to Salt Lake, California, Oregon and, later, to the mines of Idaho and Montana. A rich and colorful, often a thin or tragic, life surged about Fort Hall. Its history is told here by Jennie Broughton Brown, who has relied for her material upon contemporary narratives and records, as well as upon unpublished letters and manuscripts by immigrants and also word-of-mouth information. Mrs. Brown has produced a cross-section of the early Western migrations, with an admirable

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procession of native characters, the shrewd and able Wyeth, Bonneville, Sublette, Jim Bridger, Ezra Meeker, the grandiose and erratic Kelley. The narrative passes from the er of the trappers and early settlers to stagecoach and freighting days, and closes with a description of Indian life on the Fort Hall Reservation.

Psychology

HABITS: Their Making and Unmaking, by Knight Dunlap. *New York: Liveright, Inc. 336 pages. $3.*

This thorough and interesting book manages to explode a great many popular beliefs about psychology. Thus, brain localization is discounted in favor of a broader view of neural interconnections between the various cells. The same attitude is taken toward the so-called muscle memory, or the kinesthetic equivalent, as in the supposed case of a rat learning to traverse a maze by recalling the motions of its tail. The author expresses doubt as to the superiority of the part over the whole method of memorizing. Learning to drive a car, for example, involves learning the total control as well as the separate elementary processes. Memory must be distinguished from recollection. Thus, a man with a very poor memory may have excellent learning ability, and so may mechanically reproduce something he has read, repeating it so literally as to be judged guilty of plagiarism.

The conclusion to be drawn from these negations and distinctions is that so-called disciplinary learning is valueless. To know Greek does not help in mathematics, and the general intelligence supposedly derived from a general education is a myth. Finally, these negations may be applied in regard to bad habits. If you have a wandering memory, the best way to remember is to forget, in the sense of not making an effort to remember. Again, one way of curing mental kinks is to repeat them mechanically. For example, if you misspell the word "the" on your typewriter, keep misspelling it and your mind out of sheer contrariness will go back to the right spelling. All this is summed up in a final chapter on learning ability and intelligence, where practical methods of making good habits and unmaking bad ones are described.

History

THE BIRTH OF THE NATIONS, by Valeriu Marcu. *New York: The Viking Press. 287 pages. $3.75.*

The period of which this book treats is that of the Thirty Years' War. The method is literary-artistic; the point of view is that of a somewhat mystical economic determinism, at times bordering on the fatalistic. There is a succession of fine portraits: Tommaso Campanella, the utopian; Richelieu; Father Joseph, Richelieu's great aide in diplomatic intrigue, who has been likened to the Baron Holstein of the Bismarckian and post-Bismarckian era; Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden; Wallenstein, who aimed at being the Richelieu of Germany and was assassinated by his emperor for the attempt; Cromwell, Mazarin and many others; not only rulers, statesmen and generals, but also scholars and philosophers.

IRELAND AND IRISH EMIGRATION TO THE NEW WORLD, from 1815 to the Famine, by William Forbes Adams. *New Haven: Yale University Press. 453 pages. $4.*

Between 1815 and 1845 a million Irish men and women crossed the Atlantic to establish permanent homes in the new world. This was the first mass movement of emigrants to our shores, and Dr. Adams has studied it, both as a portion of the history of the Irish race, and as a transition period in human migrations "from pioneer movements of populations to the controlled and regimented emigrant trade of our own day." The author illustrates in detail how the determining influences in this general exodus were primarily economic. The desire to escape tithes and the general hopelessness of the future in Ireland, where so many could scarcely eke out the barest living, depopulated the country. Dr. Adams further assesses the value of this movement, both to the individual emigrants and to this country as a whole. He has organized many scattered data and his book is of definite historical importance. It might be described as a good library job, done with scholarship and thoroughness.

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Fiction

THE BOAT OF LONGING, by O. E. Rölvaag. *New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.50.*

"The Boat of Longing" was printed in Norwegian in 1922, and was written before the author's powerful three-volume saga of pioneer life. Though not to be classed with the latter work, this novel has its own value as a poetic representation of the isolation which a sensitive immigrant boy faces in the New World. In fact, one might even find parallels between the protagonist, Nils Vaag, and the late Mr. Rölvaag's own experience. Contrasting with the loneliness and conflict of Nils in America are his simple fisherfolk parents who sit at home and wait for mail that never comes —passages containing real heart break, but saved from sentimentality by that fine restraint characteristic of the author. "The Boat of Longing" should further establish Rölvaag's high place in the literature of the American Midwest.

THE BRIGHT TEMPTATION, by Austin Clarke. *New York: William Morrow and Company. $2.50.*

This first novel is written in the Irish tradition of James Stephens' early books. Aidan, a student at the ancient abbey of Cluanmore, flees the pillaging Danes and creeps unsuspectingly in the darkness into the bed of a buxom young woman. Naked and innocent he escapes, but only to fall into the hands of three roistering champions. Ethna, a chaste and beautiful maiden, rescues him, and they undertake a pilgrimage together through the bogs and glens to the shrine of a hermit. They love each other, but "the shadow of conscience that darkens Ireland at night, filling the young with torment, was cast between them," and Aidan, with the teachings of the theologians in mind, fears that this love is an offense against holy purity. He loses himself in the mist and has to traverse many real and fancied dangers over half the land, and witness the sacking and burning of the abbey, before he finds Ethna again, in the little wood of their tryst. The story, not strikingly original, is told with slow-moving charm and refreshing imagery.

Contributors

H. N. Brailsford, London correspondent of The New Republic and staff contributor to The World Tomorrow, The New Leader and The Clarion (the last two of London), is at present lecturing in the United States. He has written several books, the most recent being "Rebel India," which was published in The New Republic Dollar Series.

John Gunther, who was graduated from the University of Chicago, is in Austria as correspondent of The Chicago Daily News.

Clair Wilcox, professor of Economics at Swarthmore College, is a contributing editor of The St. Louis Post-Dispatch. He served as director of research on the Wickersham Commission and in 1930 was the originator of the economists' manifesto on the Hawley-Smoot tariff.

Matthew Josephson, author of biographies of Rousseau and Zola and of a volume of critical studies of American literary expatriates, is a frequent contributor to The New Yorker and other magazines.

Richard Flint is assistant professor of Geology at Yale University.

Leo Gershoy is associate professor of History at Long Island University and author of "The French Revolution and Napoleon," published recently by Crofts.

B. M. Selekman, formerly with the Russell Sage Foundation and author of several books on industrial relations, is now executive director of the Associated Jewish Philanthropies of Boston, Massachusetts.

M. R. Werner, author of several biographies, the best known being his life of Barnum, and of a history of Tammany Hall which was recently reissued in the Star Dollar Series, has traveled extensively in Russia.

Granville Hicks, assistant professor of English at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, is working on an interpretation of American literature since the Civil War.

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PROFESSOR E. G. SPAULDING
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